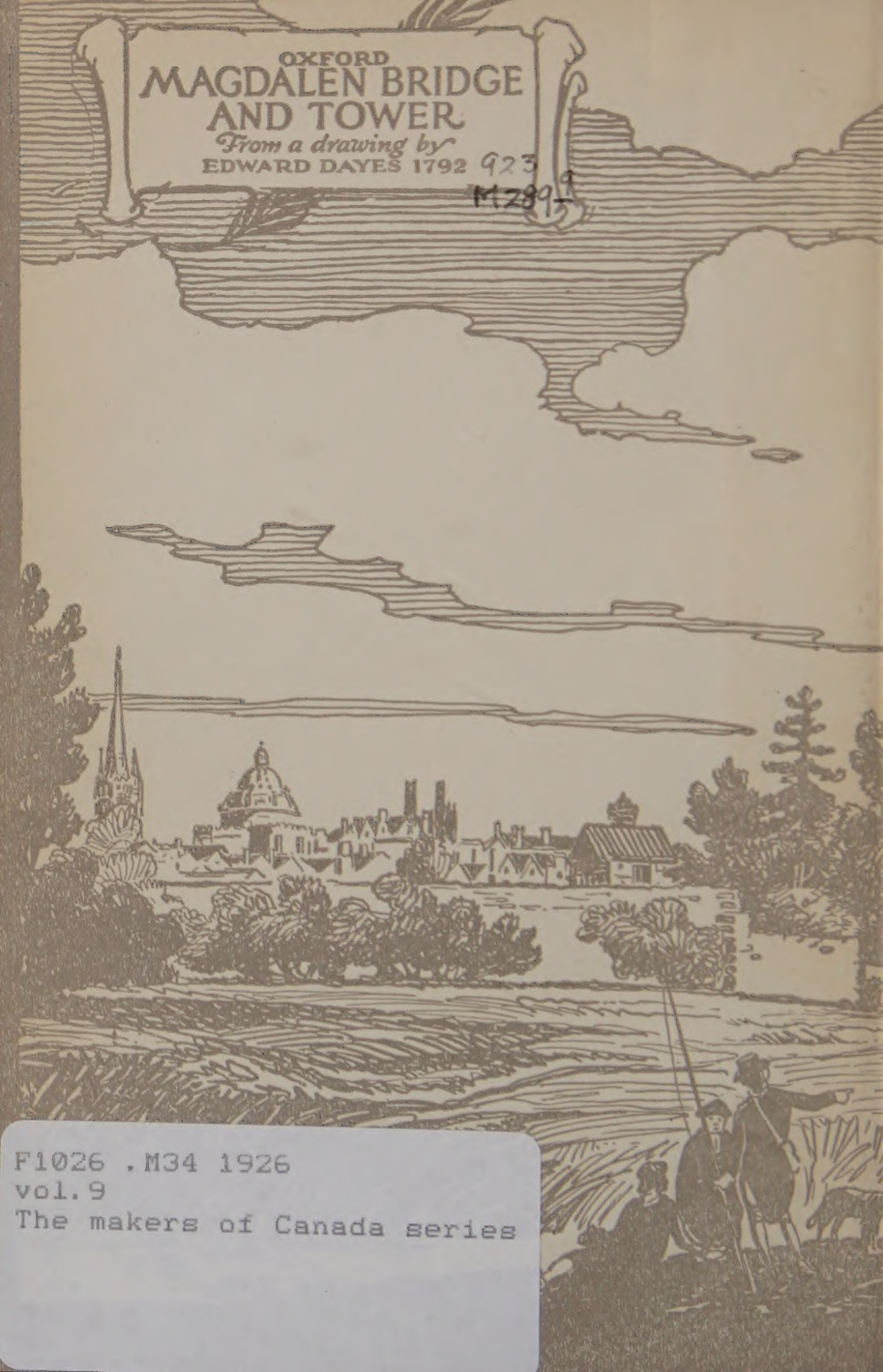
THE MAKERS OF CANADA



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VOL. IX

MACKENZIE SELKIRK SIMPSON

DOUGLAS

SIR ALEXANDER MACKENZIE

From the painting by Sir T. Lawrence

THE MAKERS OF CANADA SERIES v. 1

Anniversary Edition

MACKENZIE
SELKIRK
SIMPSON

BY

THE REV. GEORGE BRYCE, D.D.

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PREFACE

THIS volume is designed to present a composite picture of the Makers of Western Canada. The field with which we are now concerned is comparatively small, not of course geographically but historically, and to maintain just proportions it is necessary to crowd into a single volume the achievements of several men who, on a larger stage, might have wielded an influence comparable to that of many whose lives have been told in other volumes of this series.

Of the three principal figures, Mackenzie represents the explorer, Selkirk the colonizer, and Simpson the administrator. To some of us Simpson may appear to have been nothing more than a successful fur-trader, but he was much more than that. He was indeed a successful fur-trader, or rather a successful manager of the intricate and far-reaching interests of the greatest of all fur-trading corporations. He took over the control of those interests at what was perhaps the most critical stage in the history of the Hudson's Bay Company, immediately after its union with the North West Company. With consummate skill he steered the unwieldy corporation with its discordant elements through the rapids and into the smooth waters of assured prosperity. He had the rare qualities of true leadership. He could win men's allegiance with a

smile, or compel it with an iron will. His point of view was that of a fur-trader. He opposed settlement in the west, and would have kept it as an immense preserve for the Hudson's Bay Company. Nevertheless he deserves to be remembered as one of the Makers of Western Canada. His policy and his far-reaching influence were directed at all times to the maintenance of British rule and British traditions throughout the vast region that we know to-day as Western Canada.

Simpson as administrator and Selkirk as colonizer stand each in a class by himself, but while Mackenzie may be taken as the type of the western explorer, he was but one of many whose rôle as pathfinders made them in a very real sense Makers of the Canadian West. So far, therefore, as the limits of the present volume would permit, an attempt has been made to tell the stories of at least the more outstanding of the men who by original discovery helped to lay the foundations of Canada's western provinces.

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CHAPTER I

STRUGGLE OF THE FUR COMPANIES

"I SING arms and the hero," the words used by Virgil to introduce his great story of valour and heroism in the far Mediterranean may be as truly applied by us in beginning an account of deeds and men in the rise and struggles of frontier life in the far west of North America. The picturesque and heroic are not confined to any age or clime; indeed, they are characteristic in a peculiar degree of the early days of occupation of the American continent. The conflict of the two great fur companies, which carried on a trade covering the vast expanse of British North America, stretching from the Atlantic to the Pacific Oceans, brings before us operations extending over distances before which Cæsar's invasions or even Alexander's great marches shrink into insignificance.

The now venerable Hudson's Bay Company, which we recognize to-day as having a history of over two and a half centuries, had spent the first century of its rule satisfied with its place of pre-eminence on the shores of Hudson Bay, had declared several enormous dividends, and had begun to consider its right prescriptive to the trade brought by the Indians down the rivers, even from the

Rocky Mountains, two thousand miles to the west. It was a beautiful thing to see the fealty with which the northern Indians, the Crees and Chipewyans, and the Eskimos as well, regarded the English traders, and brought to them at York Factory and Fort Churchill the marten, fox and beaver skins caught, by their shrewdness and ceaseless energy, on the rivers and in the forests of the vast interior. The taking of French Canada by the English relieved the company for one or two decades from any show of competition which may have affected them on their southern border during the French régime.

But as Canada began to receive adventurous spirits from Scotland, England, and the American colonies, it became evident to the traders of Hudson Bay that new opponents not to be despised would have to be met and dealt with. The Scottish merchants of Montreal, many of whom had the blood and spirit of the Highland clans that had fought at Culloden, and Englishmen, who had braved the hardships of the American frontier and had come to Canada to try their fortunes, looked towards the fur country as a new field for adventure and profit. Men of this class are proverbially men of daring and of self-confidence. In frequent contact with the Indians, encountering the big game of the woods, crossing deep rivers, and running dangerous rapids, accustomed, in short, to all the hardships of the border country, the frontiersman is full of spirit and resource.

Accordingly, a few years after the conquest, Curry, Finlay, Alexander Henry, and many others whose names are well known, started from Montreal with their companies of Indians and French Canadians, and, going up the Ottawa River and Great Lakes, fixed their eyes on the star of hope in the far north. La Vérendrye, a French explorer, had led the way inland from Lake Superior, thirty or forty years before, though he and his followers had never gone north of the Saskatchewan. The merchants of Montreal thought nothing of penetrating farther to the north; so, leaving the Saskatchewan behind, they planned a flank movement on the Hudson's Bay Company, which would completely cut off from them the great bodies of Indians who came down the English River or the Saskatchewan to the forts on Hudson Bay.

True, a few years before this plan was undertaken, the Hudson's Bay Company, no doubt preparing to gird itself for the fray, had sent an ardent explorer, Samuel Hearne, afterwards known as the "'Mungo Park' of Canada," to explore the interior, conciliate the Indians, and ascertain the possibility of increasing trade. After two absolute failures, Hearne, setting out from Prince of Wales fort on Hudson Bay, reached the mouth of the Coppermine River, and on his return journey discovered Lake Athapapuskow or Great Slave Lake. This was a worthy achievement, and it was three years after this that

Thomas and Joseph Frobisher, two merchants from Montreal, in furtherance of the plan spoken of, built (1772) a fur trader's fort at Sturgeon Lake on the Saskatchewan River, where the northern lakes and watercourses make a connection with the Churchill or English River, which runs down to Hudson Bay.

This was a strategic point of first importance. North, east, and west it commanded the approaches; and it was a stroke of genius when the brothers Frobisher erected their simple log fort at this point, and prepared to wage a war worthy of the giants. Hearne and his colleagues at Fort Churchill were not long in hearing of the intruders and their plans; in fact, friendly Indians in a single season blazed the news on the very shore of Hudson Bay. Hearne lost no time in taking up the gage of battle thrown to him by the Frobishers. Going to Pine Island Lake, the western arm of the Sturgeon, within five hundred yards of the fort built by the Montrealers, he began (1774) the erection of Fort Cumberland, a trading-post well known to the present day.

It was a fateful year when first two forts, the embodiment of rival interests, stood face to face, a few hundred yards apart, on the Saskatchewan River, the great artery of Rupert's Land. Then and there was begun a conflict which for well-nigh half a century stirred the passions of violent and headstrong men, urged to its height one of the most celebrated competitions of modern times, intro-

duced the fire-water—the curse of the poor Indian —as a means of advancing trade, and dyed with the blood of some of the best men of both companies the snows of Athabaska, the banks of the Saskatchewan, the rocky shores of Lake Superior, and the fertile soil of the prairies on the Red River of the North.

At the very time when the thirteen English colonies on the Atlantic shore were precipitating a fratricidal conflict, in which families were divided, neighbours alienated, and English-speaking colonists separated into hostile camps, in the far north a company of Englishmen from Hudson Bay were turning their weapons against Englishmen in Canada, both speaking the same tongue, respecting the same laws, and flying the same flag.

Seventeen hundred and seventy-four and its succeeding years thus presented the sad spectacle of Anglo-Saxon interests, both in the Atlantic colonies and in Rupert's Land, in a state of fiercest conflict and division, from the tropics to the Arctic circle, from the Gulf of Mexico to the icy sea.

The Hudson's Bay Company had been averse to entering on a conflict which promised to be so severe and destructive of successful trade, but the Montreal traders were aggressive. Frobisher's men had penetrated to Lake Athabaska and built forts in the surrounding region. But the English company, with enormous energy, pushed forward its plans and built its forts. It took hold of the Assiniboine and Red River country, and built famous forts, such

as Brandon House, Edmonton House, Carlton House, and trading-posts at the mouth of Winnipeg River, on Rainy Lake, and even in the country now included in Minnesota. The great distance of these trading-houses from each other well shows how thoroughly the Hudson's Bay Company had covered the country, for each of these centres carried with it a number of subordinate posts.

The Montreal traders were no less energetic. In fact, though the Hudson's Bay Company had a higher reputation with the Indians, and though the English company could reach the interior earlier in the spring, yet the dash and spirit and acquaintance with the country of the Canadian traders made them, in organization and trading ability, more than a match for their rivals. Finding the need of strengthening themselves, the several firms of merchants who were trading from Montreal agreed to unite in 1783-4. The prospect of peace and coöperation was, however, immediately destroyed by some of the selfish and unworthy elements of the new company breaking away from it, and with the help of other Montreal merchants organizing an opposition.

Four years afterwards a cruel murder was perpetrated in the Saskatchewan region, by Pond, the marplot who had divided the company, and so great was the fear and confusion caused by this act that the two Montreal companies effected a union in 1787 into one North-West Company. New posts and a great impulse to trade resulted from this union.

The trade, which at the time of union amounted to £40,000, by the end of the century had increased to three times that sum. The last quarter of the eighteenth century thus saw the English and the Canadian fur companies, side by side, occupying the vast interior of Rupert's Land, and even crossing the Rocky Mountains in search of trade.

Into the Canadian company, among the young Scotsmen who were attracted to Canada by the fur trade, entered a young Highland adventurer, Alexander Mackenzie by name. He at once rose to prominence, and became a determined and perhaps rather aggressive and irreconcilable element among the Nor'-Westers in the Protean phases of their exciting history. The nineteenth century had just dawned as Alexander Mackenzie published in London an account of his great discovery. The book had ardent readers in Great Britain. One of these was a young Scottish nobleman, Thomas, Earl of Selkirk, who had a lofty imagination and a high public spirit. The book of travels excited in the young peer the spirit of adventure, and led to his embarking on a great scheme of emigration. In a few years, to further his emigration plans, Lord Selkirk gained a controlling interest in the Hudson's Bay Company, being opposed in this by Alexander Mackenzie, who held a quantity of stock in the English company.[1] Lord Selkirk organized his

[1] The second part of this book narrates in detail the circumstances connected with Lord Selkirk's great project.

colony under the auspices of the Hudson's Bay Company, though opposed by Mackenzie and others of the Nor'-Westers. But, as we shall presently learn, colonizer and fur trader could not at all agree. Their aims, methods, and interests were not to be reconciled, and blood ran plentifully on the bleak plains of Rupert's Land to the disgrace of both parties, who claimed the shelter of the British flag.

The imperial and Canadian authorities were both compelled to interfere. Lord Selkirk, wearied and harassed by conflicts, lawsuits, and misunderstandings, returned home to die. With sympathetic interest in this conflict from the other side, Alexander Mackenzie, far away in Britain, spent his declining years, until, in the same year, (1820) the opposing leaders passed away.

The following year saw more peaceable counsels prevail, and the two companies united under the name of the older organization as the Hudson's Bay Company. Just as the union was effected a new force appeared in the trader's clerk, George Simpson, who, as governor, was destined to unite the discordant elements, and in a career of nearly forty years to raise the united companies to a position of greatest influence.

We ask the patient attention of our readers, as with some detail we set forth the life, work, and influence of these three representatives of the great fur companies, viz., Sir Alexander Mackenzie, the Earl of Selkirk, and Sir George Simpson.

CHAPTER II

THE YOUNG TRADER

WHY so many Scottish men of education, spirit, and daring found their way, after the conquest, to Canada, and especially to Montreal, is somewhat difficult to ascertain. Scotland is a rugged country, with a climate fitted to make a hardy race; it is very far from being a fertile country in the main; a large portion of its people—larger than at the present time—were mountaineers, loving adventure and accustomed to the hardships of the heath and wood. It is thus possible that young and adventurous Scotsmen found in Canada a home in a northland, suited to their thought and liking.

Highland soldiers had clambered up the heights of Quebec, and the land seemed theirs by right of conquest. Some of the soldiers remained in Canada along the great St. Lawrence, while those who returned to their native valleys, as they told the tale of daring on the Plains of Abraham, and made "Evan's, Donald's fame ring in each clansman's ears," inspired the young and ambitious to seek out the land of the hunt and fur trade, and make it theirs.

Among those of better parts and respectability there came to the New World Alexander Mackenzie.

According to the statement of his own family, he was a native of Stornoway, in the island of Lewis on the west coast of Scotland, and not, as stated in the Encyclopædia Britannica, of Inverness. He is said to have been a scion of the old Mackenzies of Seaforth, from whom Stornoway, with the whole island, of which it is the capital, passed years ago to its present proprietors, the Mathesons, of Achany and Ardross. According to the Dictionary of National Biography, young Mackenzie was born in the year 1755, but his grandson writes to the author that his grandfather was born in 1763. The future explorer had received a fair education, and being familiar with the sea, and finding the boatman's life attractive, was well fitted for the work of the fur trade, towards which he was drawn on his arrival in Montreal at the age of sixteen.

In 1779, on his arrival in Canada, the leaders of the fur trade were Simon McTavish and the brothers Frobisher. The two companies under these leaders represented the greater part of the capital and influence of the fur trade. There were, however, restless spirits among the traders who did not acknowledge the prevailing domination. Two Americans, Peter Pond and Peter Pangman, the latter known as *Bastonnais* (i.e., the American), though possessed of little capital, were plotters of the first water. They succeeded in inducing the Montreal merchants, John Gregory, an Englishman, and Alexander Norman McLeod, a proud and aggressive High-

lander, to unite in company and fight the strong monopolists led by McTavish.

With this nest of oppositionists Alexander Mackenzie allied himself. His keenness and daring at once attracted the attention of his employers, and his selection, after a very short experience, to lead a trading expedition to Detroit, on the lower lakes, was a remarkable example of confidence. It was no easy thing to conduct a trading party from Montreal to Detroit in those early days. The rapids of the St. Lawrence had to be faced and overcome, while the watercourses were the highways for the bands of Indians from the far west, who were rendered the more treacherous by the success of the American revolutionists.

Upper Canada, through which Mackenzie wended his way to the west, was still an uninhabited forest, for the United Empire Loyalist was only finding his way to his asylum of rest north of the lakes. Crossing the Niagara peninsula along the Niagara River, or leaving Lake Ontario at Fond du Lac, where the city of Hamilton now stands, portaging to the Grand River, and descending it to Lake Erie, the adventurous *voyageurs* then coasted the shallow lake and found their way to Detroit, their destination.

Detroit had been a favourite resort of the traders under the old French régime. It is said that at the time of the conquest there were some two thousand French-Canadians or their descendants living on the banks of the Detroit River. Some have questioned

this statement inasmuch as within twenty-five years from that date, when young Mackenzie betook himself to Detroit, there were only seventy of these old French families. Either the former statement was incorrect, or else the migration of these borderers farther west to Michilimackinac and the shores of Lake Michigan had been very large. The latter is the more likely explanation.

The counting-house experience of five years in Montreal, and a year's responsibility at Detroit fitted the young Scottish trader for undertaking what was the joy of every Nor'-Wester, the journey to the far North-West. Mackenzie was visited at Detroit by McLeod, the junior member of his house, and induced to leave quieter scenes behind and adventure himself in a land yet largely unknown to him.

Now raised to the dignity of a *bourgeois*,[1] (1785) Mackenzie set out for the land that was to make him famous. Passing Mackinaw and Sault Ste. Marie, the new leader entered the great Lake Superior, and coasting its northern shore, reached Grand Portage, of which he speaks with some interest.

Grand Portage was the cynosure of every fur trader, whether he were coming from the interior to the stormy Lake Superior, or going westward through the upper lakes. To the imagination of the young fur trader Grand Portage made a strong

[1] A partner or shareholder in the company.

appeal, just as it does even now to those aquainted with the old days of the fur trade.

It lies on a most unfrequented part of the north shore of Lake Superior, some forty miles south-west of Fort William, of which it was the predecessor. A few years ago the writer paid the lonely spot a visit. After being rowed in a small boat by the keeper of a neighbouring lighthouse, in a dismal and dangerous night voyage, he reached this famous rendezvous of the old traders. The name of the place was taken from a nine mile portage to avoid the rapids of the Pigeon River. Over the portage a wagon road was constructed, which may still be seen. A few sunken timbers only are left in the water to represent the warehouses and wharves of this once thronged and important place. These formerly faced a pretty bay made by a rocky islet standing out into the lake as a protection and shelter to it. On this island is now the dwelling of a solitary French fisherman, looking like a robber's keep. Besides the fisherman there is not a white man to be found for twenty miles. An Indian village occupies the site of Grand Portage and an automobile road runs through it from Duluth to Fort William. Grand Portage was claimed by the United States, but was not given up for nearly twenty years after Mackenzie's first visit.

When Alexander Mackenzie arrived at Grand

Portage it was in its glory. Five hundred men in the employ of the fur traders assembled there, those from the east who met no Indians lived on cured rations, and were called *mangeurs de lard*, or pork-eaters; while the independent westerners were known as *coureurs de bois* or wood-runners. Into this stronghold of the old company Mackenzie and his associates had now come, representing the Gregory interests, and with the fixed determination of winning a foothold in the heart of the great fur country which extended far to the north and west.

The vigorous, if not violent, member of the company, A. N. McLeod, remained in Montreal to manage the headquarters. The members of the determined little band divided up the great territory among them. The Red River district was apportioned to Duncan Pollock, a veteran trader, the far-off Athabaska was given to John Ross, the rich Saskatchewan to *Bastonnais* Pangman, and the Churchill or English River to the young *bourgeois*, Alexander Mackenzie, who already showed evidences of a dominancy and influence by and by to become supreme. With the younger company were also associated James Finlay, son of the pioneer trader to the fur country, and Alexander Mackenzie's cousin, Roderick McKenzie, who became a well-known trader, and was the historiographer of the fur traders.

The practical talent and influence of the Mackenzies showed itself in the new organization. They

laid it down as a principle that the best results from the fur trade were not to be gained by the two companies, even though they were rivals, being in a state of friction and conflict. Accordingly Alexander Mackenzie and his neighbouring *bourgeois* of the other company, P. Small, completed their successful winter's work by carrying their furs in company to Ile à la Crosse, making the river banks resound with their joyous songs. Roderick McKenzie had as his rival in the English River district one of the greatest men of the old company, William McGillivray, and they, too, after a good winter's trade carried in company their superabundant catches to the place of rendezvous.

Unfortunately this harmony did not prevail everywhere. Trader Ross had found as his rival Peter Pond, who had basely deserted Pangman, and returned to his old masters. Pond was a man of enormous energy. He had been the pioneer of the Athabaska district, but while the successful upholder of his own company, he was the terror of his rivals and the scourge of the peace-loving Indians of the Athabaska district. Five years before this time the desperate trader had, it was believed, been the cause of the death in the Athabaska country of a popular Swiss trader, M. Wadin, the agent of a rival company, and now Ross found a constant irritation being kept up between Pond's subordinates and his own. During the whole winter matters went from bad to worse, until in one of the actual

quarrels of the two parties, Ross was unfortunately killed.

The brigades of the year, led by Alexander Mackenzie and others, had just left Ile à la Crosse to carry their cargoes to Grand Portage, when the sad news of the death of John Ross reached Roderick McKenzie, who had been left in charge of Ile à la Crosse, in the absence of the party *en route* for Lake Superior. McKenzie considered that the matter of Pond's violence, since it was the second occasion on which he had been charged with murder, was so serious that it was absolutely necessary that the partners at Grand Portage should know of it. Accordingly, in a light canoe manned by five *voyageurs*, he hastened unguided to the rendezvous and made the painful journey in a month's time.

The news of the bloodshed in Athabaska filled the minds of the members of both companies in Grand Portage with dismay. All felt the words of the wise man to be true, that the "beginning of strife is as when one letteth out water," and this being Pond's second offence no one knew to what it might grow, especially in the remote Indian territories. The matter was fully debated and canvassed among the traders, and it was decided that the union of the two companies was imperative. Accordingly the North-West Company was established (1787) with a larger membership, and the three firms, headed by McTavish, Frobisher, and Gregory respectively, became the agents for the joint ad-

ministration of affairs at Grand Portage and Montreal.

All eyes were turned upon the rising young trader, Alexander Mackenzie, as the man to meet the emergency in Athabaska. He alone was fitted "to bell the cat." While he was, under the united company, to act ostensibly in concert with the bloodthirsty Pond, yet the understanding was that he should take the supervision, as Pond's extravagant ideas had lost for him the confidence of the traders. Masson states that Mackenzie on going to the Athabaska district, had determined to follow the course of the Hudson's Bay Company, viz., to withdraw all posts from beyond Lake Athabaska, and compel the northern Indians to trade within the precincts of a well-organized fort built upon the lake. His fear of the influence of the Hudson's Bay Company, however, led him, on fuller consideration, to change his plans, and to push out agents even farther to the north than had yet been done.

In his administration of this northern district Alexander Mackenzie at once showed his surpassing ability. His surrender of preconceived opinion, and his adoption of the policy of expansion, showed him to be a man of observation and decision. The fact that he was a very young man was all in his favour in his new work. At twenty-four he had the energy of maturity and the adventurous instincts of youth. In a service such as that of the fur companies in a new country, overcaution, prejudice,

and slavery to routine are deadly sins. When Simpson, a young man who had only spent a winter in the country, was chosen as governor of Rupert's Land, he succeeded because he had ability and had nothing to unlearn; so young Alexander Mackenzie proved his adaptability and his fitness for leadership.

Another mark of his foresight and good judgment was revealed in his selection of the localities which should serve as centres for future expansion. Thus early the thought of the explorer was directed to the two oceans, one to the north and the other to the west, as opening up a field for the largest speculation and enterprise.

Having decided to adopt the new policy of "advance," he selected Leroux and his party, who had been brought from Great Slave Lake, to return thither and to push the trade with vigour. Leroux not only did this, taking up a post on Great Slave Lake, but, finding the Indians indolent and careless about trade, he despatched a well-known Chipewyan leader known as the "English chief," to induce the northern Indians to come to his fort with their furs. Leroux also sent a sturdy Highland trader named Sutherland to visit distant tribes of Indians and win their good-will by a liberal distribution of presents. The good news spread far among the solitudes of the remote region beyond, so that in the following spring a large number of Indians from a lake far to the west, hitherto unknown to the

traders, came to search out the lavish monarch of the north—Leroux. The policy, open spirit, and attractive manner of Mackenzie were all found reflected in the whole body of his subordinates.

Another stroke of genius, also looking to the future, was his choice of a commanding position on Peace River, the great waterway flowing to Lake Athabaska from the west, a position which dominated even the western slope of the Rocky Mountains. To this point he despatched Boyer to found a fort and open trade on the route to the western sea. This he did at a spot where the Little Red River, a tributary from the south, flows into the Peace River.

It was the custom of the trading companies to give positions of trust only to men of ripe years and experience. Seldom was a man known to be promoted to a commissioned office while under forty years of age. That Alexander Mackenzie should be placed in charge of so difficult and important a district as Athabaska was an unheard-of thing, but it simply showed that this man, so honoured at an early age, was destined to be one of the master minds of the fur trade, though it is well to state that his sudden elevation did not free him from the jealousy afterwards manifested by some of the traders.

CHAPTER III

FORT CHIPEWYAN

LAKE ATHABASKA, on account of its geographical position, was the key to the far north. Vast regions inhabited by the best of fur-bearing animals were, and are to the present day, tributary to it. As already stated, the violent Peter Pond had led the way to the district, although he had not taken possession of the lake itself. It was in 1778 that Pond built his post on Elk River, or, as the French called it, Rivière à la Biche, thirty miles south of Lake Athabaska. To this point Alexander Mackenzie had come, here his broad plans were laid for the extension of the fur trade, and here the brilliant designs were conceived that were to make him famous as an explorer.

Masson, in his book on the North-West Company, depicts in a striking manner the feelings of many of the more educated and enterprising fur traders, as they contemplated the monotony and humdrum of much of a fur trader's life. He represents Alexander Mackenzie as not entirely above the tedium which he sought to relieve by bursts of bustling activity. "How do you spend your time?" asked a young clerk of the North-West Company of a comrade of his own age, who, like himself, had received a good

education. "I rise with the sun; I go to see the traps; if a number of Indians arrive I buy their furs, then I eat *tollibee* (white fish) three times a day. Do you see? I find the time very long, and I fear that my constitution will be seriously injured by that kind of a life, but what can be done? I make a dog train; I bend some wood for snowshoes; and with perseverance I hope to learn the use of the crooked knife."

Such a life could not satisfy Alexander Mackenzie; his intelligent and open nature revolted from the idea of passing the best years of his life in such intellectual stagnation: now some dirty savages to receive; some goods to exchange for furs; some *voyageurs* to despatch to the interior; these for companions, men without education and sometimes of bad character! Ennui, the worst of maladies, consumed him; he felt himself degraded and useless. His ambition demanded a wider horizon, and for his energy wider fields, and the work of seeking new regions; in short, the desire to travel and explore was burning within him, and he resolved to do his share towards the discovery of the famous north-west passage, if it existed, and to reach the Arctic Ocean.

Various reasons, however, led to his considering the plan very fully, before he decided upon it. There was, as already stated, a considerable amount of jealousy among the traders. Mackenzie had belonged to the smaller company, he was unpopular with

Le marquis, as the great McTavish, the head of the traders in Montreal, was called, and he knew that it would be almost impossible for him to get a commission to explore the far distant north, and to incur the expense and danger of such a voyage—even should he offer himself at the annual meeting of the partners at Grand Portage.

Another difficulty lay in his way. The district to which he was appointed had by the conduct of Pond become unsettled, and there was no one of his subordinates to whom he could entrust the direction of affairs. The first obstacle would be largely removed if the second were solved. Accordingly the thought came to his mind to secure as his lieutenant in the district his cousin, Roderick McKenzie, who was not well satisfied with his position in the trade, and was seriously thinking of leaving the fur country altogether, and returning to Montreal.

The vision of expansion placed before Roderick McKenzie by his cousin proved an attractive one, so that he decided to remain in the country, and soon found his way to the Athabaska district. A strong friendship was thus developed between the two cousins, though, as we shall see, to be interrupted for a time in subsequent years by the changes in the fur companies. The work entrusted to Roderick McKenzie, and the way in which he did it, resulted in giving him a high place among the traders.

Arrived at Elk or Athabaska River, Alexander

Mackenzie and his confiding kinsman laid their plans for accomplishing what they had in view. The post was thirty miles from Lake Athabaska, or Lake of the Hills, as it was also called. Alexander Mackenzie addressed himself to putting the trade of his district in thorough order, and kept his hold of Elk River post, the old centre, but Roderick was sent to take up new ground and build a new headquarters.

To Alexander Mackenzie's keen eye it was plain that Lake Athabaska would be a more central point from which to send out his messages to the traders, and to which they could come conveniently with their furs. It would afford a line of immediate communication with the vast lake and river system of what we now know as Great Slave and Great Bear Lakes and the Mackenzie River, and it would also lead the way to passages through the Rocky Mountains, where lay great regions still to be explored.

Roderick McKenzie has left us in his interesting "Reminiscences" the story of how he took up his position on Lake Athabaska, and pushed forward the work entrusted to him. "After making every possible inquiry and taking every necessary precaution," says the enterprising novice, "I pitched upon a conspicuous projection which advanced about a league into the lake, the base of which appeared in the shape of a person sitting with arms extended, the palms forming, as it were, a point. On this we settled and built a fort, which we called Chipewyan. It is

altogether a beautiful, healthy situation, in the centre of many excellent and never-failing fisheries, provided they are duly attended to at the proper season."

The matter of food is ever an important one in these far northern regions, where nature is not profuse in her gifts, so that the proximity of good fishing-grounds was an important consideration for the hungry traders.

The first Fort Chipewyan was built on a promontory on the south side of Lake Athabaska, a few miles east of the entrance of the Elk River into the lake. It was regarded as a great triumph of skill when this farthest great outpost of the fur trade was completed. Its commanding position and its commodious and comfortable appointments were a surprise to the Indians and old *voyageurs* who frequented the region. Roderick McKenzie had an eye for the æsthetic, so he fitted out his new fort with every luxury possible in those remote and barren regions. His painting of the interior of the new post, and his attention to its comforts were something unheard of in such a region. The new fort was at once accepted, by Indians and traders alike, as the natural centre of trade, and was at times spoken of as the "Emporium of the North."

Roderick McKenzie always had a taste for literature, as was seen years later when he opened correspondence with traders all over the north and west, asking for descriptions of scenery, of adven-

ture, folklore and history. On his building Fort Chipewyan we learn that he also had in view the founding of a library at the fort, which would not be only for the immediate residents of Fort Chipewyan, but for traders and clerks of the whole region tributary to Lake Athabaska, so that it would be what he called, in an imaginative and somewhat jocular vein, "the little Athens of the Arctic regions." This library became, perhaps, the most famous in the whole extent of Rupert's Land, and more than fifty years afterwards we read of Lieutenant Henry Lefroy, on his expedition for magnetic observation, spending the winter in Fort Chipewyan, and revelling in the treasures of its well-selected library; therefore the library was not entirely, as Masson contends, scattered and destroyed in the first generation after its founding. The establishment of a library in the far north, and other similar incidents, are evidences of the intelligence and even culture found in the posts of the fur traders from the time of Mackenzie to the present. Elsewhere the writer has amplified the matter, and with slight modification said: That the officers of the fur companies were not traders only is made abundantly evident. In one of his letters Governor Simpson (1833) states that their great countryman, Sir Walter Scott has just passed away; he thanks one of his traders for sending him copies of *Blackwood's Magazine*; and orders are often given for fresh and timely books. A little earlier we find the minute interest which the fur traders took in public

events in a letter from Chief Factor John Stuart, after whom Stuart's Lake in New Caledonia was named. Stuart speaks to another fur trader of the continuation of Southey's "History of the War of the Peninsula" not being published, and we know from other sources that this history fell still-born, but Stuart goes on to say that he had sent for Colonel Napier's "History of the Peninsular War." "Napier's politics," says Stuart, "are different, and we shall see whether it is the radical or a laurel [Southey was poet laureate] that deserves the palm." These examples illustrate what all close observers notice, that the officers of the fur companies not only read to purpose, but maintained a keen outlook for the good, even for the most finished contemporary literature.

Here, then, the winter of 1788-9 was spent in the new fort by Roderick McKenzie. Even a view of the map can hardly make vivid to us the great distance to the far north that Fort Chipewyan is. From Montreal to Grand Portage took the *mangeurs de lard* many days. After the *coureurs de bois* left Grand Portage with song and flags and mirth, time fled quickly until the outlet to Rainy Lake was reached, which was a stopping-place for the western expeditions. On August 1st the canoes, manned with sturdy French-Canadians or Indians, left Rainy Lake for the far north. As the season was fast passing the canoemen worked with might and main in order to reach their destination. It was the

end of September before the *voyageurs* and their well-laden canoes reached Athabaska.

About this time of the year the traders from the far north of Lake Athabaska, and the Indians of remote Arctic regions reached Fort Chipewyan, and the whole lake was alive with canoes, urged forward by Indian men and women coming to the trader, whom they regarded as the mightiest of men.

This trading season over, the early winter came in October, when officers and men had little to do but sort their furs, and secure food for subsistence, filling in the intervals of their time with the interests of the library of which we have spoken. Roderick McKenzie, writing of the winter at his new fort, says: "These men and myself, I recollect, visited six nets three times a day from under the ice during that fall fishery, but no mittens can be used during that serious operation. The fingers and wrists while occupied in managing the nets and disentangling the fish from the meshes, must be kept constantly immerged to prevent their freezing. I had a number of *voyageurs* in charge; they were divided into crews independent of each other and in different houses, each having to provide itself at the fisheries."

Whether it was trading with the greasy Indians from the north, in their poverty and misery, or hastening up and down the waterways in summer, or living almost entirely on the fish which were caught with such difficulty and hardship, it is plain that life at Fort Chipewyan represented, under the

most favourable circumstances, the embodiment of all that was inhospitable, uninteresting, and laborious. And yet we are told that Athabaska and the Mackenzie River were the greatest desire of the hardy traders.

CHAPTER IV

A DASH TO THE ARCTIC SEA

THE dream cherished by Alexander Mackenzie, that he should find a new way to the Arctic Ocean, was not a mere vain ambition. Nearly twenty years before, Samuel Hearne, the explorer of the English company from Hudson Bay, had succeeded in reaching the Arctic Ocean by way of Clinton-Golden Lake and down the Coppermine river to the frozen sea.

Hearne's exploration, whether looked at from the point of view of the enormous distance, the fact that it was accomplished after two previous failures, the lack of experience and scientific training of the man, or the bravery of the explorer, had been a marvel. True, he had made a mistake in placing the mouth of the Coppermine river nearly four degrees farther north than it should have been, but he had succeeded in his most hazardous attempt.

As the representative of a rival company, and as he believed, of a more energetic company, Alexander Mackenzie heard with nervous interest from the tales of the Indians who visited Fort Chipewyan of a vast river rivalling the Saskatchewan or the Churchill, and on which the white man had never set eyes.

Roderick McKenzie had now gained command

of the details of management, and his adventurous cousin felt that he might at length strike to the north and add his name to the list of great national explorers—perhaps to be the discover of the north-west passage sought for so ardently by his predecessors. All things being well prepared Alexander Mackenzie started on his voyage. We have his own account of the memorable journey to which we shall refer. Never did a recital of exploits begin in so modest and even commonplace a way as this :—

Journal of a Voyage, &c.

June, 1789. Wednesday, 3. "We embarked at nine in the morning at Fort Chipewyan, on the south side of the Lake of the Hills . . . . in a canoe made of birch-bark."

To make a successful voyage in the wilds of the far north the great requisite is a reliable crew and a good band of followers. Hearne had found this out. Mackenzie himself knew it well from his half-dozen years of western exploration and trade. He had secured a guide, the "English chief," who was a true successor of Matonnabee, Hearne's famous guide. The "English chief" had often made the journey from Lake Athabaska to Hudson Bay to trade with the English company, and had thus gained his name. With his two wives and two young Indians in one canoe, and his followers and slaves to act as interpreters and food providers in another, the chief accompanied the "Kitche Okema"—Mackenzie.

Mackenzie led the way in his own canoe, accom-

SAMUEL HEARNE

From an engraving in the Public Archives of Canada

panied by four French-Canadians, two of them having their wives, and a steady young German named John Steinbruck. His four Canadians deserve mention. They were François Barrieau, Charles Ducette, Joseph Landry, and Pierre De Lorme.

Leroux had before, as we have seen, penetrated the northern route to Great Slave Lake, and now he was at Fort Chipewyan to assist the explorer in his great departure for the north. Leroux was taking merchandize with him to trade in Slave Lake, but the other canoes being overloaded, Mackenzie required him to take clothing and merchandize to serve the advance party when they should leave Slave Lake behind, and push forward into the great unknown.

All being ready the brigade started on its way on June 3rd, 1789, crossed Lake Athabaska, twenty miles wide, to a river that led out of the lake, and for seven miles further the party pushed on, interrupted by the hunters stopping to shoot a wild goose and a couple of ducks. Camp was soon made and the journey was well begun on the first day. The next day they followed the tortuous stream to every point of the compass, until, after a ten miles' spurt, the branch joined Peace River, the vast stream coming from the west.

Some confusion is caused by travellers stating that the Peace River empties into Lake Athabaska, and by others declaring that Lake Athabaska flows towards Peace River. Both are correct. During high

water the channel followed by Mackenzie runs from the river into the lake, but at other times, as in this first voyage, the lake flows into the river.

The Peace River, which rises to the west of the Rocky Mountains and flows through them, is, at the point where Mackenzie reached it, a mighty stream, a mile broad. Indeed, from this point of junction the river changes its name, and flowing northwards to Great Slave Lake, is known as Slave River.

After reaching Slave River the party hurried forward, making twenty-four and a half miles, and then enjoyed the excitement of running the upper rapids. Camp was not struck until they had made thirty-six and a half miles more, thus accomplishing seventy-one miles as their day's work. The camp was at the junction of the Dog and Slave Rivers and just above the second rapids of the Slave River.

The next day was one of difficulty. Two rapids required the unloading of the goods at the Décharge, as the road around the rapids is called; the load only is taken over the carrying-place, and the canoes are floated light down the rapids. Twelve painful miles followed, in which there were the three dangerous portages called D'Embarras, Mountain, and Pelican, besides one or two smaller carrying-places, and other dangerous rapids. From this part of the river onward are fierce rapids, boiling caldrons, and whirling eddies. Some twenty-one miles brought needed rest to men and Indians. The watchful hunters had provided themselves on

the way with a fine quarry of geese, ducks, and beavers.

The fourth day out the party pushed on with marvellous energy, under Mackenzie's fierce driving, making seventy-two miles, and were only prevented from doing as great things on the following day by cold winds and pelting rain, after they had gone about forty-four miles. Another day in camp was lost by this storm, and on June 9th an early start brought them to Great Slave Lake at nine o'clock in the morning, after a short but rather difficult run of fifteen miles.

This journey over fierce rapids, driftwood eddies, and rocky portages, in the face of strong headwinds, and with stoppages to provide food, over a distance of two hundred and seventy-two miles in less than a week, shows the remarkable power of inspiration that Alexander Mackenzie had, and is a tribute as well to the strength, skill, and hardihood of his chosen band of French-Canadians and Indians.

Great Slave Lake now presented a dismal sight to the impetuous *voyageurs*. A biting wind blew towards them, but at least they were free from the troublesome mosquitoes, which had been their constant attendants down the river. Mackenzie now began to realize that he was approaching the Arctic regions. Trees grew on the banks of the streams in a yellow clay mixed with gravel, though in low levels there was a rich black soil. Although it was the middle of June the ground was not thawed

more than fourteen inches deep, and the shore of the lake had not a spot of green upon it. The explorer heard from the Indians that near by were wide plains frequented by herds of buffalo, and that moose and reindeer were found in the woods. Many beavers built their houses on the smaller lakes and rivers. Swans, geese, and ducks appeared in vast numbers. It was near this spot, now reached by the explorer at Great Slave Lake, that Leroux and his party had three years before built their houses.

For twelve days the party moved along the shore of the lake, now avoiding the floating ice, now protecting themselves from the copious rains, and always seeking by a northward trend to gain the outlet, which was to lead them on their journey to the north.

Before leaving the lake Mackenzie met the Yellow Knife Indians who came with their peltries to trade with Leroux. After the bartering was over the explorer addressed the assembled savages and informed them of his intended visit to the north, that his traders would remain at this spot until their friends and relatives came to trade, and that, if the trade should be important enough, he would build a fort upon the lake. They promised, in return, great things, and sought the protection of the "Kitche Okema" from the Chipewyans, who, they declared, tyrannized over them.

All needed supplies having been transferred from Leroux' canoes to his own, on June 25th Mackenzie

started for his northern voyage, amid volleys from the small arms of the traders, who were being left behind. With parting admonitions to send his communications back to Roderick McKenzie at Fort Chipewyan the explorer paddled cheerfully off to the northern solitudes. For no less than four days the party moved hither and thither, under the leadership of a Yellow Knife guide, seeking for the river that was to lead them to the north. Well-nigh discouraged, they at length succeeded, by going round the long point of an island, in finding the looked-for channel on the south-west of Great Slave Lake. Passing a shallow some ten miles wide, going gradually westward, the party reached the river, where the width was narrowed to half a mile, and where the current became stronger. By the last day of the month they were running westward, with the Horn Mountains in sight on their left, extending from east to west.

On July 1st the brigade was fairly under weigh, though the frequent rains and clouds of mosquitoes made their journey most uncomfortable. After travelling for four days the scenery of the country completely changed, and they were among Indians, who were very wary and inaccessible. It was only after the "English chief" had succeeded in reaching these shy natives that they consented to meet Mackenzie, and they came to him with much trepidation.

Mackenzie's own account of their meeting is

graphic: "There were five families, consisting of twenty-five or thirty persons, and of two different tribes, the Slave and Dog-Rib Indians. We made them smoke, though it was evident they did not know the use of tobacco; we likewise supplied them with grog; but I am disposed to think that they accepted our civilities rather from fear than inclination. We acquired a more effectual influence over them by the distribution of knives, beads, awls, rings, gartering, fire-steels, flints, and hatchets, so that they became more familiar even than we expected, for we could not keep them out of our tents, though I did not observe that they attempted to purloin anything."

Mackenzie states that they told him fabulous stories about the river, which he was bound to explore. They were certain that it would take several winters for him to reach the sea, and that old age would overtake him and his followers before they could return. Horrid monsters and evil spirits they declared would have to be opposed and conquered, besides, two impassable falls barred the passage down the river. Though this information did not alarm the resolute leader, yet it carried consternation among his Indians, who firmly believed that as they went farther north the game would become scarcer.

Pushing on, however, day by day the party made remarkable progress, and on the fifth day of July they passed the mouth of the Great Bear River

which pours into the Mackenzie the sea-green coloured water of the great drainage area of Great Bear Lake—the largest lake in the fur traders' domain, containing, as it does, no less than fourteen thousand square miles.

On leaving the party of Dog-Rib Indians, Mackenzie had compelled one of the men of the tribe to accompany him as guide; he was now induced to let him return. His next guide was obtained from a second band of Indians they had met, known as the Hare Indians, but he was unwilling to go far. Another guide escaped after leading them a short distance.

As they proceeded northward the explorers met new races of Indians. Mackenzie describes them with much interest. On the tenth of the month he met a tribe called the Degutbee Dinées or the Quarrellers, who gave the pleasing information that the distance to the sea was not great. The explorer's attention was also attracted by a range of snowy mountains to the westward, which ran parallel to his course. He now found by observation that he had reached 67° 47′ north latitude. His latest guide tried to persuade him to go no further, being afraid of the Eskimos. Mackenzie, however, insisted on pressing forward, and took the middle channel, which contained a larger body of water. The party had evidently reached the delta of the great river which has since borne their leader's name. Landing on an island on Sunday, July 12th, Mac-

kenzie and the "English chief" ascended to the highest point, "from which," says the explorer in his matter-of-fact fashion, "we discovered the solid ice extending from the south-west by compass to the eastward." The hope was now high in the breasts of the whole party, especially in the French-Canadians, that they were about to reach the western sea, for which La Vérendrye and many other Nor'-Wester and Hudson's Bay Company leaders had sighed in vain. It was noticed that during the night the baggage in their encampment was being reached by the rising of the water.

On the fourteenth of the month Mackenzie gave orders to man the canoes, and then he forced his way in the face of a fierce wind that threatened to engulf his craft. Thus he sought to reach the sea. He landed at eight o'clock on a considerable island, which he called Whale Island, and in giving an account of this makes an important entry in his journal: "This morning I ordered a post to be erected close to our tents, on which I engraved the latitude [elsewhere stated by him to be 69° 7′] of the place, my own name, the number of persons which I had with me, and the time we remained there."

Early next morning it was found that the water had again risen and invaded their baggage, and they began to surmise that this was the rising of the ocean tide. The party were now within a short distance of the Arctic Sea, and were very anxious to reach that towards which they had so strenuously striven.

They found themselves a degree or two within the Arctic circle, and were amazed to see that they were in the land of the midnight sun.

CHAPTER V

ASCENT OF THE GREAT RIVER

ALL readers of Mackenzie's journal experience great disappointment as they reach his account of his nearest approach to the Arctic Sea. The rise of the sea tide was surely a certain indication to him that he was near the ocean. The appearance of ice-fields, seen by him from the heights of the islands among which he passed, suggested to him the frozen surface of the Arctic Sea. For some reason he turned back, having only reached the delta of the great river which he had been descending. Why did he do this?

Not a reflection of regret do we find, nor is any indication given that he considered his northward journey ended, save for his erection of the post on which his name was engraved. An unobservant reader would suppose as he describes his journey among the islands of the delta that he was following the same course down stream as he had been pursuing for the preceding six weeks.

However, closer attention will show that on July 16th, after discussing with the Indian guide the possibility of the party meeting with friendly Indians, who might inform them further of the route, Mackenzie received the information that he would not

likely meet them unless it were at a small river coming from the east which fell into the great one. The journal says: "We accordingly made for the river, and stemmed the current." Here is the first indication that the explorer had given up his journey, and was now ascending the river.

The delta of the great river had been full of interest for the whole party. One day Mackenzie's men saw a great many animals in the water which they had thought at first were pieces of ice. These they found to be whales, and the party took to their boats in hot pursuit. The prey, however, evaded the pursuers, and it was well. As the explorer says, "it was a very fortunate circumstance that we failed in our attempt to overtake them, as a stroke from the tail of one of these enormous fish would have dashed the canoe to pieces."

Before getting back from this vain expedition a fierce north-east wind arose, and a heavy fog fell; the waters rose in violence, and the party reached the land with the greatest difficulty. The only satisfactory course seemed to be to keep in the lee of the islands, which, as already mentioned, he called the Whale Islands, on the greatest of which he had encamped.

We are thus left to infer the reasons for his hasty return, which the explorer seems to attempt so ingeniously to gloss over. The Indians had found it difficult to obtain much game, the party had not more than five hundred pounds of food supply on

hand, and the prospect of facing an Arctic winter with its decreasing amount of game was, even to so brave a man as Alexander Mackenzie, sufficiently alarming. The islands on which they had encamped were exposed to the winds off the icefields, and they here found the weather at the season which elsewhere would be the middle of summer, most severe. The entry in the journal for July 15th is: "As the evening approached the wind increased, and the weather became cold. Two swans were the only provision which the hunters procured for us."

Moreover, there are constant indications that the guide wished to return homeward, and the "English chief" after reaching the lower portions of the river gave evidence very clearly that he would prefer to be back in his own region of Athabaska. Certainly the ice on the lower part of the river suggested that the short summer would soon be over, and pointed to the necessity of hastening southward. Mackenzie's reticence in regard to the reason for his sudden departure southward is undoubtedly very remarkable.

One remark alone in the later part of his voyage may give a clue to his course of action. On August 13th, nearly a month after the return voyage was begun, the feeling of distrust between the "English chief" and the commander showed itself very clearly. After giving an account of the altercation, Mackenzie, in the journal, says: "I stated to him that I had come a great way, and at a very con-

siderable expense, without having completed the object of my wishes, and that I suspected he had concealed from me a principal part of what the natives had told him respecting the country, *lest he should have been obliged to follow me.*" Here, then, seems the explanation that a cabal had been made against Mackenzie by reason of which he could not obtain the necessary information to enable him to proceed. It would have been more satisfactory to us if the explorer, who had so nearly accomplished his object, had taken us into his confidence.

On the day of their return southward Mackenzie records seeing the first spruce tree that had been in view for some time. He makes the remark that it is extraordinary that there should be any wood whatever in a country where the ground never thaws below five inches from the surface. But as the ascent of the river was made the weather became pleasant, and the evidences of animal life in the flocks of wild fowl and their young became more frequent.

Numbers of the natives, not seen on the way down the river and who were strange to the ways of white men, were now met. "They were alarmed at the firearms in our hands, and asked us not to discharge them in their presence." When they saw the explorer engaged in writing, their curiosity was excited. Through the medium of the "English chief" Mackenzie ascertained that these Indians had learned from the Eskimos, whom they had met, that they had seen large canoes (ships) full of white men, to

the westward, eight or ten winters before, from whom they had obtained iron in exchange for leather. The expanse of water where they had met them was called by them Belboullay Toe or White Man's Lake.

On July 24th the exploring party passed a small river, on each side of which the Indians and Eskimos collected flint. The bank was crumbling away in places, and among the débris were found pieces of petroleum, having the appearance of yellow wax. A few days more brought the returning travellers to the zone of huckle-berries, raspberries, and that fruit widespread throughout the fur trader's country, the Saskatoon berry, known to the French-Canadians as *poire*.

Fifteen days after the return journey was begun Mackenzie's party reached the entrance of the rushing stream running into the great river from Great Bear Lake. Being now the first day of the month of August the explorers passed here the first night, since leaving Lake Athabaska, in which it was dark enough to see the stars. As the party came to this precipitous part of the river they were compelled to take to the shore, and, walking along it, to use their towing lines to drag the canoes up the stream. At times on the banks of the river, at this point, their attention was called to the whole bank giving off a sulphurous smell. The source of this odour proved to be a seam of coal which had been on fire for years.

About August 11th Mackenzie began to find the "English chief" restless and moody. The wily leader seems to have been afraid that the explorer would leave the great river, and explore some of the larger tributaries coming into it from the east. The "English chief" had told some of the French-Canadians that he intended before the party reached Slave Lake to leave them, and make a visit to a tribe of Indians, whom he knew.

It was at this juncture that the "English chief" drew upon himself the reproaches of Mackenzie, to which reference has been made. When rebuked the "English chief" denied the charges made by the explorer, stated that he would not accompany the party any further, and after the Indian fashion gave way to a loud and bitter lamentation, in which his relatives assisted him in their vociferations of grief, though they gave as their excuse that their tears flowed for their dead friends. Mackenzie, after two hours of this extravagant sorrow, soothed their wounded feelings, and the chief returned to his allegiance.

On August 22nd the party was rejoiced at reaching Great Slave Lake; here, making use of sails on their canoes, they greatly hastened their speed. Two days afterwards the worried explorer was rejoiced to meet his trader Leroux, whom he had left on the lake to pursue the fur trade. Leroux had not succeeded very well, but had visited a band of Indians on Martin Lake, and obtained a number

of peltries. While on Great Slave Lake Mackenzie matured a plan for sending Leroux, under the guidance of the "English chief" to visit the Beaver Indians, whose country lay to the west. When he reached Leroux' house, which had been built at the mouth of Yellow Knife River, and which afterwards became known as Fort Providence, he tells us "he spent the whole night making the necessary arrangements for the embarkation of the morning, and in preparing instructions for Leroux."

Leaving his faithful trader Leroux, whose name as a pioneer has ever since been associated with Great Slave Lake, Mackenzie and his party struck across the lake, and after a somewhat stormy passage arrived at the entrance of the river running from the south into Slave Lake, at which point Leroux' first house for trading had been built. The ascent of the river—the Slave—had now to be made, and its rapids and fierce eddies required skill in his canoemen, though the effort of the ascent was not, on the whole, more arduous than that of the descent had been.

To face the well-known portages gave some variety and excitement to the sturdy French-Canadians, who had gone the whole journey without a murmur, and who had the greatest confidence in *L'Écossais*, commanding and imperative as he was to them and to all. Ten days sufficed to traverse the distance of something more than two hundred and sixty miles,

and the fact that on the day before their arrival at Lake Athabaska "it froze hard during the night, and was very cold throughout the day," showed how fortunate the party was in reaching its destination at the very spot where they had encamped on June 3rd.

The last entry of the journal is as follows:—*September 12th, 1789.* "The weather was cloudy, and also very cold. At eight we embarked with a north-east wind, and entered the Lake of the Hills. About ten the wind veered to the westward, and was as strong as we could bear it with the high sail, so that we arrived at Fort Chipewyan by three in the afternoon, where we found Mr. McLeod with five men busily employed in building a new house. Thus, then, we concluded this voyage, which had occupied the considerable space of *one hundred and two days.*"

The results of this great journey of Alexander Mackenzie down La Grande Rivière are worthy of consideration:—

1. There was opened up to the knowledge of the world a region some two thousand miles in length, with resources of coal, petroleum, salt, and furs that are only now beginning to be fully known.

2. Mackenzie, from conference with the Indians met on the lower Mackenzie River, established the existence and course of the Yukon River more correctly than it was laid down on the maps for two generations following his time. He made out that

the Yukon emptied into Norton Sound rather than into the Arctic Sea, as some early maps give it.

3. The great explorer, though of a commanding spirit, adopted in treating the Indians the pacific measures which have always been successful with them, and began the policy which was consistently followed by the Hudson's Bay Company during the century just closed.

4. While the daring leader took with him a certain quantity of provisions, leaving at Ile à la Cache a small supply of pemmican for his return journey, yet in the main he adopted the policy afterwards followed by the Arctic explorer, Dr. John Rae, on his great journey up the west coast of Hudson Bay in search of Franklin, viz., of depending on the game and fish that might be secured along the line of exploration. Mackenzie's journal gives minute accounts of the number of ducks, geese, swans, beavers, reindeer, and fish obtained *en route.*

5. The explorer gathered much useful knowledge from Indian and Eskimo hearsay and experience, which led him to infer from their story of Belboullay Toe or White Man's Lake (or Sea) that they were speaking of the great Pacific Ocean, and referred to Spanish expeditions or perhaps to the voyage of the celebrated Captain Cook up the west coast of America some ten or eleven years before.

Mackenzie, by his determined courage, reticence, and prudence, by his shrewdness and intelligence, and by his consummate leadership, added not only

to the sum total of British heroism, but also on this voyage secured the experience and laid the foundation for the greater expedition by which he was to gain his chief fame as being the first white man north of Mexico to cross the continent to the Pacific Ocean.

CHAPTER VI

A WIDER HORIZON

ARRIVING in September at Fort Chipewyan Alexander Mackenzie entered upon a restful winter, the affairs of the fort being well administered by his cousin Roderick. During the absence of the great explorer in the far north, Roderick McKenzie had gone down the long route to Grand Portage to carry his furs and plan for further trade. By meeting the other traders there he came in touch with the views and projects of the company.

That winter brought the whole matter of exploration before the traders in their far northern post, Fort Chipewyan. Roderick McKenzie informed his cousin that the partners at Grand Portage had no friendly feeling for the spirit of exploration. They regarded the returned voyager from the "Great River" as ambitious, and as being more chimerical than practical. Alexander Mackenzie was, moreover, considered by them, both by disposition and previous connections, as being not thoroughly loyal to the united companies.

But the project of a greater effort and greater fame occupied the imagination of the explorer all that winter, and in spring as soon as the rivers were open he went eastward to Grand Portage

with a great purpose throbbing in his bosom. As he journeyed eastward, and met other traders hieing away to the rendezvous, he obtained scraps of news, and was most faithful in sending them to lonely Fort Chipewyan. He informed his cousin that food was very scarce at the dépôt from which Athabaska was supplied, also that McTavish was greatly dissatisfied with the packs of furs from Athabaska for the past year; but that the various traders on their downward journey were carrying a very successful catch as the result of the past winter's work. From Grand Portage he writes expressing dissatisfaction, and says, "My expedition was hardly spoken of, but that is what I expected."

However, the disappointed trader returned from Grand Portage realizing that he had a growing number of friends among the wintering parties, and that *Le marquis* (McTavish) was losing influence on account of his haughty temper and domineering spirit. Sending his cousin Roderick to Great Slave Lake, Alexander Mackenzie occupied Fort Chipewyan for another winter. Some of his letters to his relative are extant, and these show an intimate interest in the affairs of the far north. He speaks of organizing the Yellow Knives more fully as a tribe, and appointing a chief over them. Reference is also made to the question of continuing the fort on Great Slave Lake. The explorer is willing to do this if trade demands it, but is of opinion that a fort will need to be established on the south side of the

lake near the entrance of the Slave River, instead of the house built by Leroux on the far northern arm of Slave Lake. He shows his expansive spirit by referring to the other Indians, upon whom he had stumbled on his great voyage. He refers with strange self-depreciation to the great river, which he had discovered, under the unlikely name of "River Disappointment;" and asks his cousin to make diligent enquiry among the Indians "regarding a great river [Yukon] which is reported to run parallel with, and falls into the sea to the westward of the river on which I voyaged, and to commit such information to paper." He refers in the spring to his regret that it is not his cousin's turn to thread the watercourses to the great meeting in Grand Portage, and is sorry that he will not have his company.

If the adventurous journey of Alexander Mackenzie had not been appreciated by his own companions of the North-West it was otherwise with their rivals of the Hudson's Bay Company. Four years before Mackenzie had gone north, the desperado of the company, Peter Pond, had made a map of the country for the purpose of presenting it to the Empress of Russia. Through knowing nothing of astronomy or geography, Pond made up his distances from the stories of the *voyageurs*, who made a league's journey in the time it took to smoke a pipe. The *voyageurs'* leagues were thus too hastily made. Counting in this fashion Pond made the distance from Hudson Bay to Athabaska much

longer than it really was, and, knowing from Captain Cook's observations the number of miles from Hudson Bay to the Pacific coast, he made the unknown territory west of Athabaska much less than it really was.

Though not distinguished in exploration, the Hudson's Bay Company, no doubt impelled by the desire to meet their rivals, and also proud of Hearne's successful explorations twenty years before Mackenzie's Arctic journey, sent out from England a young lad named George Charles to assist in exploration. The lad was only fifteen years of age, had received one year's instruction in a mathematical school, and was consequently quite incompetent to do the work of taking astronomical observations and reckoning distances.

The British government was at this time engaged in delimiting this territory and that of their rebellious colonies, which had separated as the United States, and were anxious to secure as large a territory as possible. In order that full information might be at its disposal the government asked the Hudson's Bay Company to carry on explorations and secure all possible knowledge of the country even to the Pacific Ocean. Induced to do so by the Colonial Office, the company in 1791 sent out as astronomer Philip Turnor, a most competent man, to obtain the information sought for. Coming with imperial authority the expedition was entitled to the recognition of the North-West Company as well as of its rivals.

Alexander Mackenzie, on his way eastward, heard of the coming of the expedition, and wrote to his cousin at Fort Chipewyan to make preparations for assisting it, and instructed him to lodge "the English," as he calls them, if there should be room in the fort. Fourteen days later Alexander Mackenzie writes from a point farther to the east, stating that he had met Mr. Turnor, and says, "I find the intention of the expedition is discoveries only. I also find the party ill-prepared for the undertaking."

This remark shows that the Nor'-Westers had entertained some suspicion as to the Turnor expedition, but the meeting had satisfied Mackenzie that they should not only not assume hostility towards this undertaking, but should even help to forward its aims. He states that Mr. Ross, the leader of the expedition, wished to pass the winter at Fort Chipewyan, and to secure storage at the fort for some of his baggage when he proceeded further on his journey. It was found, however, by astronomer Turnor, as he wintered at Fort Chipewyan and enjoyed the hospitality of the North-West Company's officers, that the purpose of his expedition could be accomplished without proceeding further. He took correct observations, and, on finding that the fort was in 115° west longitude, showed that instead of Lake Athabaska being only a short distance from the coast, as Pond had maintained, it was more than three hundred leagues from it.

Alexander Mackenzie had already taken so strong a grasp of North-West affairs that he was a necessary figure at the great annual meeting at Grand Portage. Writing in August to his cousin Roderick at Fort Chipewyan as to the results of the council, he informs him that the public announcement could now be made of a re-arrangement of the North-West Company's affairs for the next seven years, 1791-8. The well-known names still appear as partners: McTavish, Frobisher and Company hold six-twentieths of the stock; Montour, Grant, Small, Gregory, Pangman, and Alexander Mackenzie each one-tenth; while McGillivray, who had bought out Pond for eight hundred pounds, and a Mr. Sutherland own one-twentieth each.

He gives information of the continued employment of Lesieur and Fraser in the far west, of his deputy, Leroux, in the far north, of Cuthbert Grant in the centre country, of trader Thorburn, and of the astronomer Thompson, to whom further reference will be made. A reference to his proposed continuation of his visit to Montreal, and of the possibility of his taking a journey across the ocean, closes the letter to his faithful kinsman in far-off Athabaska.

Alexander Mackenzie carried out the journey of which he had hinted to his cousin. The reason for this trip was found in the great project of further exploration that Mackenzie had harboured in his bosom. On his former journey to the Arctic the explorer had found his lack of astronomical know-

ledge and the want of proper instruments a serious drawback in marking the steps of his journey from day to day, and in fixing with any degree of accuracy the points necessary either for proper description or for affording the material for making correct maps.

Accordingly, Mackenzie determined to spend his winter in Britain, perfecting his knowledge and obtaining the necessary instruments for use in his proposed exploration. How this winter was spent we have no information, but we may be sure it was used to some purpose. It was no easy thing for a man who had become already so prominent in the fur trade to gather himself together in a remote Hyperborean fort, make arrangements in the face of jealous and unsympathetic partners, absent himself from his work and responsibilities for a year, and cherish the purpose of gaining some higher niche in the temple of fame by his sacrifice.

Probably another aspect of the matter would cause Mackenzie's greatest self-denial, that is, stooping again to become a learner. If we do not mistake Mackenzie's character, he was a stalwart, self-possessed, and somewhat proud man. He had distinguished ability, and had with it that *perfervidum ingenium Scotorum* that gives, not precisely self-confidence, but a dignified self-respect that we call manliness. It was not easy for such a man to sit at the feet of however distinguished a teacher and imbibe the elements of mathematical science. It was

only pressing ambition and thirst for useful service for his company and country that nerved Alexander Mackenzie thus to humble himself.

CHAPTER VII

WINTER ON PEACE RIVER

HIS object in Great Britain having been gained, Alexander Mackenzie returned during the summer in time for the great meeting at Grand Portage in August; and the affairs of the traders being arranged for another year, he hurried back to Athabaska to meet his cousin and talk over future plans. His design, until then kept secret, was made known. He had early in the season sent word to Fort Chipewyan that a small party should be sent on to Peace River to cut square timber for a house, go on with its construction, and surround it with palisades.

This was not the first expedition to Peace River, for it will be remembered Alexander Mackenzie sent, in 1788, trader Boyer to found a post on the Peace River, where the soil is exceedingly fertile and the climate mild enough to allow the growth of turnips, carrots, parsnips, and potatoes. The spot selected by Boyer had in the four intervening years already gained the name of the "Old Establishment."

On October 10th, 1792, Mackenzie, having arranged to leave Fort Chipewyan under his cousin Roderick's control, prepared to push on to his winter

quarters on Peace River. Steering west his two canoes, which were laden with his men and the necessary articles for trade, Mackenzie came to the Vail River, which afforded a passage to Peace River, and in two days was on his way up the Peace River itself. Peace Point was soon reached, this name having been given to a portion of the bank of the river formerly in dispute between the Kinistineaux (Crees) and the Beaver Indians. Here the quarrel had been settled, and the spot was henceforth memorable. The falls of Peace River, twenty feet high, were avoided by a portage, and the party soon came to the Old Establishment. Mr. Finlay, the Nor'-West trader who had just reached the fort over which he was placed, was overtaken by Mackenzie's party.

On the tenth day after his departure from Fort Chipewyan Alexander Mackenzie reached Finlay's Fort, and was received with the firing of guns and much demonstration. About this fort, under Finlay's charge, there was an Indian population of three hundred, sixty of whom were hunters. Waiting for two or three days Mackenzie found them coming in till their full numbers were well-nigh reached. During the whole summer it was the custom of the Nor'-Westers to give no spirits to the Indians, but now on the approach of winter they made known their desires to the great white chief. Mackenzie thus describes his method of dealing with them:—

"As they very soon expressed their desire of the

expected regale, I called them together to the number of forty-two hunters, or men capable of bearing arms, to offer some advice, which would be equally advantageous to them and to us, and I strengthened my admonition with a nine-gallon cask of reduced rum, and a quantity of tobacco. At the same time I observed that as I should not often visit them I had instanced a greater degree of liberality than they had been accustomed to."

As the ice was beginning to set on the river, Mackenzie, after spending five days with Finlay, took his leave amid the firing of musketry, having sent on his two loaded canoes two days in advance for fear of the ice.

The next place of interest reached by the explorer was the forks of the Peace River. Here the river was seen to come from two directions, one east, the other, twice its size, from the west. Pursuing the larger branch for six miles to the south-west, the spot already selected for winter quarters was reached. The place was well chosen, on the high banks of the Peace River. Cypress, arrowwood, and thorn trees covered the banks. On either side of the river, though hidden by the trees, were extensive plains, and on these buffaloes, elks, wolves, foxes, and bears abounded. Far to the west was to be seen a ridge called Deer Mountain, and here, as the name implied, great numbers of deer were found.

As soon as the explorer's tent was pitched he gathered the Indians together, and sought to gain

their favour by giving each four inches of Brazil tobacco and a dram of spirits, and by smoking the pipe of peace with them. He then addressed them, saying that he understood they had troubled the former *bourgeois*, and reproved them for this, though assuring them that he would treat them kindly if they deserved it, but severely if they showed carelessness or opposition. After bestowing more presents of the same kind, he had assurance from them of the greatest devotion and of pride that he had seen fit to visit them.

The explorer was kept busy till November 7th settling matters with the Indian hunters, and fitting them out for the winter catch. This done he immediately began the erection of his houses. The men sent on early in the season had been most industrious, and had cut and squared enough palisades eighteen feet long and seven inches in diameter to enclose a square of one hundred and twenty feet; they had dug a ditch three feet wide to receive the pickets; and had also prepared timber and planks enough for the erection of a house.

On the sixteenth of the month the ice stopped running in the other branch of the river, the tongue between the two being only a league across. The same thing happened to the stream in front of their fort six days afterwards, and the freezing of the streams enabled the hunters to move about more freely, and to secure a plentiful supply of fresh meat, although as there was no sleighing, the game

had to be carried home in a very toilsome manner on the shoulders of the men.

Mackenzie was called upon to exercise his medical skill in curing his people of several acute diseases, but all those in health were kept hard at work upon the houses. A young Indian had lost the use of his right hand by the bursting of a gun. He was brought to Mackenzie in a very bad state. Poulticing, salving, and burning away the proud flesh with vitriol, the explorer succeeded, by this most heroic treatment, in saving the young man's life and gaining the confidence of all his friends. A murder occurred among the Indians and threw out the trader's plans for gathering furs, as all disappeared for a time lest they should be punished by the masterful man.

Until November 2nd Mackenzie took observations of the temperature with the thermometer; upon the coldest morning it registered 16° below zero. He was, however, much gratified during this inclement season, to be saluted by the singing of birds as he walked through the woods. Two days before Christmas the explorer's house was ready, and he willingly deserted his tent to occupy the rugged mansion.

Towards the end of the month what is known as a Chinook wind came sweeping down the Peace River from the west side of the mountains. It came with the force of a hurricane, licked up every particle of snow, and covered with water the ice on the river. New Year's Day, which was not quite so wild, was

observed according to the usual western custom of firing guns at the break of day. A moderate allowance of rum and cakes was provided for all.

Early in February the weather became very cold, and continued so for six weeks. None too soon for the impetuous and impatient explorer, the middle of April brought the marvellous season so well known in the North-West when winter merges suddenly into summer. The trees were in bud, and many plants were in bloom. On the twenty-fifth of that month the river was clear of ice.

A preliminary step to the great exploration he had in view was to settle up the fur trade for the winter. The furs were all gathered and packed securely for the long transport to Grand Portage. The two old canoes were repaired, and four new ones built. On May 8th the hunters and canoemen who could be spared were dispatched in these six canoes, which were filled with furs and provisions, and with a full bundle of public and private despatches to his cousin Roderick on Lake Athabaska, to be transmitted by him to the great assize of the traders at Grand Portage.

Now for the West! Mackenzie's astronomical observations were now of some value. He tested carefully the instruments which he was to use on his long journey to the western sea. He was now ready for embarkation, for he had worked out the details thoroughly during the winter. A monster canoe, twenty-five feet long, of twenty-six inches

hold and four feet nine inches beam, and yet light enough for two men to carry without fatigue for miles, was to transport the whole party and their belongings, provisions, goods for presents, arms, ammunition and baggage to the weight of three thousand pounds.

The crew was to consist of ten persons. Their names deserve to be mentioned. After the great explorer came his lieutenant—Alexander Mackay, of Reay—who relieved Mackenzie of much responsibility. He was an able man, and was chief among the notable traders who afterwards carried out the plans of John Jacob Astor on the Pacific coast. Mackay's career was afterwards arrested all too soon; he was killed on the *Tonquin*—a story of the coast known to all. Two of Mackenzie's faithful French-Canadians—Joseph Landry and Charles Ducette, who had accompanied him on his former voyage were ready to follow him on the present occasion. Four others also stood willing to go. These were Baptiste Bisson, François Courtois, Jacques Beauchamp, and François Beaulieu, the last of whom died as late as 1872, aged nearly one hundred years, probably the oldest man in the North-West at the time. Archbishop Taché gives an interesting account of Beaulieu's baptism at the age of seventy. Two Indians complete the list. One of these was so indolent that he bore the name of *cancre*—the crab.

One of the things that constantly causes our

wonder as we read the records of North-West exploration, both by Nor'-Westers and their rivals from Hudson Bay, is the magnitude of the results achieved by men so poorly provided with even the necessaries of life and travel. Here were ten men about to undertake a terrific journey of more than three hundred leagues through a country partly unknown, and such of it as was known presenting enormous difficulties. Mountain torrents must be stemmed or circumvented, vast regions must be traversed where game was reported scarce, and Indians, famed for fierceness and deceit, must for the first time be taught fear or respect for the adventurous intruders upon their hitherto unmolested domain.

That man was of heroic mould who could originate such an expedition, and could inspire other men to face such dangers, where lofty purpose and over-mastering ambition could alone nerve him through the discouraging and even desperate periods of his journey. And yet how simple and natural the explorer's account of the beginning of so great and difficult an expedition: "My winter interpreter, with another person, whom I left here to take care of the fort, and supply the natives with ammunition during the summer, shed tears on the reflection of those dangers which we might encounter in our expedition, while my own people offered up their prayers that we might return safely from it."

CHAPTER VIII

OVER THE GREAT DIVIDE

THE great voyage was now begun (May 9th, 1793). The party started out full of hope. On the Peace River, as the travellers Butler, Gordon, and others have told us, the scenery is beautiful, the banks are fertile, and animal life is abundant. An elk killed and a buffalo wounded were the achievements of the young men as they landed for the night encampment.

Mackenzie thus describes the river :—" This magnificent theatre of nature has all the decorations which the trees and animals of the country can afford it ; groves of poplars in every shape vary the scene ; and their intervals are enlightened with vast herds of elks and buffaloes ; the former choosing the steeps and uplands, and the latter preferring the plains. . . . The whole country displayed an exuberant verdure ; the trees that bear a blossom were advancing fast to that delightful appearance, and the velvet rind of their branches reflecting the oblique rays of a rising or setting sun, added a splendid gaiety to the scene, which no expressions of mine are qualified to describe."

The men of the voyage were, however, too intent on this enterprise to be delayed by the hunt or by the

fertile valleys. The banks soon rose to greater heights, and the navigation became even more difficult. The cascades and rapids became correspondingly more trying, and soon the first band of Rocky Mountain Indians who were questioned failed to tell anything of the route beyond the first mountains, though they took much interest in the proposed expedition. Within three days of starting it became evident that bears were very numerous. Along the bank footprints were seen of the great grizzly, the terror of Indian and trader alike. The monotony was varied by the *voyageurs* having to gum their canoe, which had already met hard usage ; by stopping to examine an island with canoe-birch growing upon it; by passing the entry of a tributary river ; and by watching the shore for bears and buffaloes.

A dangerous rapid well-nigh put an end to their canoe on the tenth day out, and thus some delay occurred. Again *en route* the party saw the strength of the stream increase. The shore rose three hundred feet above the water, and on the following day the members of the party were compelled to cut steps in a soft stone wall around a boiling rapid, in doing which their canoe was broken. No bark was found with which to mend it, and poles were used to steady the canoe till at last in a bottomless whirlpool all help failed. The river became one continuous rapid, and even the well-trained *voyageurs* were thoroughly alarmed.

Discontent now very naturally began to prevail

among the men. Mackenzie had little hope himself. Further progress up the river by canoe seemed impossible. Clambering with his Indians to the heights above the river the explorer took observations, and his own account of the situation is: "The river is not more than fifty yards wide, and flows between stupendous rocks, from whence huge fragments sometimes tumble down, and falling from such height form the beach between the rocky projections."

It seemed as if an impassable barrier had been reached. Mackenzie sent Mackay and the men up the steep banks to explore, and they returned through woods, over steep hills, and through deep valleys, with the news that the rapids extended for three leagues. They were not, however, discouraged, and the narrator states that a "kettle of wild rice, sweetened with sugar, along with the usual regale of rum," renewed their courage.

After the return of this scouting party, the resolve was taken to fight a way through the obstacles, and persevere in the journey. Cutting a road through the thicket, and up rocky steeps, slow progress was made—a mile on one day, three miles the next—over steep hills, dragging the canoe on the toilsome march, until, after making about eight miles in three days, they succeeded in passing above the falls of the river, and in bringing up all their baggage. A longer route taken by the Indians could have been followed. It was probably a foolish thing to take the more

direct way, but it was certainly an exhibition of British endurance. The fall that had been passed was the one of which the River Indians had asserted that it was equal to Niagara. In this they were of course mistaken.

The rapids passed, the canoe was again committed to the opposing stream, and the journey resumed. They were now completely surrounded by mountains, whose tops were perhaps fifteen hundred feet above the stream. The altitude was beginning to influence the temperature. The journey, though near the end of May, was sometimes interrupted by the party landing to build a fire, on which occasion what the commander continues to call a "regale" of rum was always indulged in with satisfaction.

On the last day of the month the forks of the Peace River were reached, and the party was much troubled as to which branch of the stream should be followed. Mackenzie was anxious to take that coming from the north-west, but the old Indian guide insisted that by taking that from the south-east a carrying-place would soon be reached by which another large river would be accessible. On one of the last days of the month the commander himself began to feel that his voyage was becoming a heavy burden. Thoughts of the lower country recurred to him, and he took an empty rum-keg, and after writing a full account of his voyage thus far, placed it in the keg, which he carefully sealed up and committed to the rushing river to be carried perhaps to

some kind friend, or to be picked up by some other explorer as his last memorial. The crew, also driven nearly to desperation, in their fancy heard a discharge of firearms, which arose entirely from their disturbed imaginations. They were quite mistaken as to its being a war party of the Kinistineaux, as no Indians appeared.

Mackenzie, Mackay, and all their followers were now becoming sceptical as to there being any carrying-place over the mountain height. The leader and his lieutenant, leaving the canoe, betook themselves to a mountain on the river bank, laboriously clambered to the top of it, and Mackenzie climbed the highest tree on the height. He saw only a vast wooded expanse before him. The mid-day sun proved very hot to the party shut up in the forest, and mosquitoes were a continual plague.

On the return of the two spies their canoe was gone, whether up or down stream they could not tell. Great anxiety and many gloomy surmises filled their minds, but in time the crew, which had found the river exceedingly difficult, appeared. The strong current had broken their canoe, and thus delayed them.

On Sunday, June 9th, the party was surprised to hear confused sounds in front of them. They proceeded from some Indians who had chanced to see them, and had become much alarmed. Not knowing how strong or in what mood their unseen neighbours might be, Mackenzie directed his boat-

men to cross to the opposite side of the river. When they were not more than half way across the river, two men appeared upon the cliff brandishing their spears, and showing their bows and arrows in token of defiance, meanwhile shouting loudly. After parleying, however, they were reassured, and the party joined them on the shore. They had never seen white men before. They examined the newcomers with the greatest care. The whole Indian encampment proved small. There were only three men, three women, and seven or eight boys and girls.

Mackenzie's hopes of finding the carrying-place, and the way over the height, now began to rise again. The Indians, however, professed the utmost ignorance ot any such thing. The explorer plied them with presents, gave sweets to the children, and made himself most friendly. They still denied any knowledge of the road he sought. Time is of value in dealing with Indians, and so Mackenzie continued to delay, hoping to gain the much desired information. Their reticence was probably ignorance and mental obliquity rather than any studied concealment.

One evening one of the men lingered by the fire after the others had retired. In talking he let fall a reference to a great river, and pointed significantly up the river on which they were. Pressed by Mackenzie he at length admitted that there was a great river flowing towards the mid-day sun (south), of which a branch flowed near the river up which they

were proceeding. He stated also that there was a small river leading from the Peace River into three small lakes connected by portages, and that these emptied into the great south river. He denied any knowledge, however, that the great river emptied into the sea.

Before giving up the matter with the Indian, Mackenzie succeeded in getting a map of the region, with its rivers and lakes drawn on a strip of bark by a piece of coal. One of the Indians was now induced to act as guide to the desired spot.

On the day after the interview with the friendly Indian the party started, and two days afterwards quitted the main branch, and, working their way in the canoe painfully up the encumbered stream, reached the first small lake. The whole country in the neighbourhood was flooded, so that the canoe passed among the branches of the trees. They were surrounded by the evidences of life. No Indians were met, but beavers abounded; swans were numerous; ducks and geese were plentiful in this secluded retreat; tracks of the moose were visible; blue jays, yellow-heads, and one humming-bird cheered their hearts; and wild parsnips, of which the *voyageurs* were fond, grew in abundance.

On June 12th, 1793, Mackenzie makes the important announcement:—"The lake is about two miles in length, east by south, and from three to five hundred yards wide. *This I consider as the highest and southernmost source* of the Unjijah or

Peace River" (latitude 54° 24′ north, longitude 121° west). It was a long way from this mountain jungle to the mouth of the river which he had seen when approaching the Arctic Sea.

Hope had now reached fruition. The height of land had been gained. The boat crew landed and unloaded their canoe, and here they saw running over a low ridge of land—eight hundred and seventeen paces long—a beaten path to another lake. On each side of the lake was a mountain, the space of the lake between them being about a quarter of a mile. A *cache* of Indian supplies—nets, hooks, and some implements—was found. Mackenzie took what he wanted of them, and left in exchange a knife, fire steels, beads, awls, etc. At this point two streams tumble down the rocks from the right and flow eastward towards the other lake; and from the left two other streams pour down the rocks and empty into the lake they were approaching. Proceeding west the water was now flowing with them, and they were beginning to descend the western slope. Six miles from the third lake a careful and painful effort was made, and the western side was reached. The river ran with "great rapidity, and rushed impetuously over a bed of flat stones." Beside this far west stream they encamped for the night.

The boiling waters of this treacherous river were worse than anything they had seen on Peace River. On the resumption of the journey after their long portage the canoe had been dashed with fury on the

rocks. Then a few holes were stove in the bottom, and the sad condition of the *voyageurs* was such that the "Indians without attempting to help, sat down and gave vent to their tears." The canoe escaped destruction, although ammunition and some utensils of value were lost. While mending the shattered canoe Mackenzie despatched two of his men through the westward thickets to find the great river they were seeking.

On June 19th Mackenzie makes this announcement: "The morning was foggy, and at three we were on the water."

The story of the succeeding days need hardly be given. The travellers were on the stream which Simon Fraser descended in 1806, this has always been regarded as one of the most dangerous feats ever undertaken by man. With every variety of anxiety and hardship they courageously braced themselves to the effort, and for three days continued the descent.

On the way a band of intelligent Indians was met, whose chief was a sagamore of great age and wisdom. The old chief informed the explorer that he was not on the way to the western sea. He was going southward, and the sea lay to the west. Provisions were getting short, and the prospect was that, if any time were lost, there could be no return to Lake Athabaska during the season then in progress. He was informed that he should have left the Nechaco, or Fraser River, a considerable distance

up, by a small tributary flowing into it from the west.

To turn back is not easy for any one, much less to a man of Alexander Mackenzie's stamp. But the Indians adhered to their former statements, and startled him with their frankness. One said, "What can be the reason that you are so particular and anxious in your enquiries of us respecting a knowledge of this country? Do not you white men know everything in the world?"

These were hard questions for the explorer. Mackenzie gathered his company around him, and laid before them the alternative of going back, or of going on and proceeding by the land route to the sea. To his surprise and gratification they all declared in favour of the march to the sea. Mackay, the faithful lieutenant, engraved the explorer's name and the date of arrival at this farthest point down the Fraser River on a tree upon the banks of the stream.

And now on the west side of the great divide the party is pausing before the return journey up the furious Fraser.

CHAPTER IX

FIRST TO THE PACIFIC AND RETURN

ON June 23rd the famous party having decided to descend the Tacouche Tessé or Nechaco (Fraser) River no further, prepared to ascend the river until they reached the newly-decided course by which they would proceed by land to the Pacific Ocean. Just as the party was ready to depart the guide proposed to save time by crossing by land to his lodge, and then to meet the party farther up the river. Mackenzie did not relish the proposal, thinking it merely a plan of the guide to desert the party. The leader was helpless to prevent the course suggested, and so the guide and his people departed by land.

Rumours and suspicions now haunted the minds of Mackenzie and his followers. It was said hostile Indians were likely to beset their way, and they were thrown on their guard. The explorer deemed it best to stay for a time at their encampment, which they named Deserter's Creek.

While waiting here a peculiar incident happened. The explorer was awakened at midnight by a rustling noise in the forest and the barking of dogs. Later on the sentinel announced to the leader that he saw a human being creeping along on all fours

about fifty paces above the camp. This was thought at first to be a bear, but proved to be an old man, blind and infirm, who had been left behind by the Indians, and had lain hidden and without food for two days. This strange prisoner was obstinate and somewhat knowing. He was, as the party moved slowly up the river, taken with them by force, and at last after efforts to escape was left by his own request on Canoe Island, being provided with a supply of food. As long as the old man was with Mackenzie he proved through his restlessness and cunning a veritable, "old man of the sea."

Mackenzie's canoe had now become so leaky that steps to repair it became necessary. On the twenty-eighth of the month the work of building another canoe was undertaken. Different parties were sent into the woods in search of bark, watape (the fine roots of the thorn used for sewing the bark), and gum. After several failures at last the materials were provided. But now the foreman of the canoe-builders was very slow and half-hearted. Mackenzie berated him, telling him he knew he did not wish to go on with the journey. To his whole party, however, the brave explorer again declared that he would go at all hazards, even if he went alone, and he thus shamed his followers into action.

On July 3rd the expedition reached the mouth of a small river, which he called the West Road River. This ran into the Nechaco from the west. The question now was whether to follow this river to the

coast, or to ascend the great river further north before taking the westward direction. His followers on being called together in council decided to ascend the great river further. Their decision was wise, for during the day they saw two canoes approaching them from the north, and to their surprise and joy one of these contained the guide, who had, as they supposed, deserted them, and six of his relatives. A painted beaver robe adorned the returning wanderer, and he was made still more gorgeous by presents from Mackenzie, who was also liberal to the friends of the guide.

The Indians were of the Tinné or Chipewyan tribe, which is found from Lake Athabaska up the Peace River nearly to the Pacific coast. They were now near the starting-place for the seaboard. Mackenzie and his Frenchmen allowed the Indians to go on ahead, and meanwhile took precaution to bury, under the ashes of their fire, supplies of pemmican, wild rice, a keg of gunpowder, and near by two bags of Indian corn, to await their return. Overtaking the advance guard, the party assembled and proceeded to build a stage on which to place their canoe, and a square enclosure of logs to contain all articles which might be left behind when they undertook their land journey.

All was now ready, and, heavily laden with food, arms, and ammunition, French-Canadians and Indians prepared for the long tramp, the leader taking as his share of the burden his astronomical instru-

ments. The party started on short rations of two meals a day. Ascending a steep hill they trudged wearily westward, and halted at an Indian camp. This was twelve miles from the place of departure, and here they were joined by a number of Indians who were to accompany them.

Journeying steadily westward, meeting new Indians, and entering their houses; wearied by long and trying marches; seeing snow-capped mountains along the way; once or twice, though short of food, hiding pemmican along the trail for the return journey; and keeping up the spirits of his followers, now by fault-finding, now by persuasion, this born leader of men urged his way to the long-desired western sea.

As the travellers pushed on over their course, new scenes met them. The Indians increased in numbers, lived in better houses, and seemed to be in much better circumstances. At one point Mackenzie and Mackay were received by a chief in truly baronial style, every deference and consideration being shown them by this forest magnifico.

On July 18th a river was reached, and with canoes obtained from the thrifty natives the *voyageurs* returned to their native element, and were at home on the rushing river, with their faces towards the sea.

At one point the superstition of the Indians led them to bring their sick to Mackenzie. Some cases were beyond the explorer's skill, and he describes

the orgies by which the medicine men sought to cure those patients afflicted by the most aggravated ulcerous wounds. When Mackenzie deigned to heal, his chief recourse was to Turlington's balsam, which he declared to be a safe remedy, especially when only a few drops in warm water were applied.

The explorer thus describes his visit to a great chief of the region, and we see readily that the Indians had far more intercourse with white traders on the Pacific seaboard than was generally supposed:

July 19th, 1793. "I paid a visit to the chief, who presented me with a roasted salmon; he then opened up his chests, and took out of one of them a garment of blue cloth, decorated with brass buttons, and another of flowered cotton. These I supposed were Spanish. They had been trimmed with leather fringe after the fashion of their own cloaks. Copper and brass are in great estimation among them, and of the former they have great plenty. They point their arrows and spears with it, and work it up into personal ornaments, such as collars, ear-rings, and bracelets, which they wear on their wrists, arms, and legs. . . . They also have plenty of iron. I saw some of their twisted collars of that metal which weighed upwards of twelve pounds. . . They have various trinkets, but their manufactured articles consist only of poniards and daggers. Some of the former have very neat handles, with a silver coin or a quarter or eighth of a dollar fixed on the end of them."

Mackenzie was about to take an observation to learn his whereabouts, but he was suddenly stopped by the chief, probably on some superstitious ground. His ready acquiescence in the chief's wishes was probably a benefit to the expedition, as it led to his being supplied with a canoe, fully equipped, in which he was able to pursue his voyage, accompanied by the young chief as a special mark of his favour.

Before leaving Mackenzie discovered that the chief had no fear of the instruments, except that he was apprehensive that they might drive the salmon from the river. He also pointed out the large cedar canoe, forty-five feet long, in which, ten years before, he had gone to the south with forty of his Indians, and had seen two large vessels filled with white men, who received him kindly. These were, no doubt, the ships under command of Captain Cook.

Under the guidance of the young chief the expedition went on its way down the river, the Bella Coola, soon to find it difficult to navigate on account of the many channels into which the river divides. It now began to show the influence of the tides, and the Indian guides evinced a great disposition to desert the party, no doubt dreading the fierce natives they would soon encounter on the coast. Their stock of food was also well-nigh exhausted. Small mussels or anything eatable were regarded as valuable. Seeking shelter from the wind in the channels of the river, the party kept near the land, and here met three canoes with

fifteen men in them. These Indians were rather aggressive. They examined with some forwardness the belongings of the white men, and assumed an air of indifference and disdain. One of them, indeed, was insolent, and declared that a large canoe had lately been in the bay, and that one of the men whom he called "Macubah" (Vancouver) had fired on him and his friends, and that "Bensins" (Johnstone—Vancouver's lieutenant) had struck him on the back with the flat part of his sword. The insolent Indian then persuaded Mackenzie's Indians to leave him. A troublesome savage actually pushed his way into Mackenzie's canoe, and insisted on examining the explorer's hat and handkerchief.

Mackenzie now determined to land, but the attitude of the Indians led him to think it well to take precautions for defence. Accordingly, in landing, the white men and servants took possession of a high rock. The people who had come in the first three canoes were the most troublesome, but in time they went away. The natives having left the party unmolested, the hungry *voyageurs* took such a meal as they could spare from their scanty viands. Lying down on the rock, which was little larger than was needed for their accommodation, the members of the expedition remained strictly on the defensive.

Mackenzie, now wishing to mark his visit, determined to make an inscription on the side of the good rock that had served him for defence. So he mixed a quantity of vermilion with melted grease, and

wrote on the inland face of the rock: "*Alexander Mackenzie from Canada by land, the twenty-second of July, one thousand seven hundred and ninety-three. Lat. 52° 20′ 48″ N.*"

It is rather a curious fact that one of Vancouver's ships was, on the very day of Mackenzie's arrival, anchored off Point Maskelyne on the coast, some two and a half degrees north of Mackenzie, at the point where one of Vancouver's lieutenants had fired upon a group of Indians, as referred to by the insolent native.

The proximity of Vancouver's force was unknown to Mackenzie, and so of no help to him. Not liking the situation on the top of the memorial rock, the explorer moved his camp three miles further away from the Indian village, to a retired cave on the coast. The conduct of the Indians and their thievish disposition annoyed him.

After having had some trouble with the young chief who accompanied him, the explorer determined to start on his return journey. Before doing so he took five astronomical observations, and worked out the longitude to be 128.2° W. He makes a remark as to Captain Meares, an explorer who had visited the Pacific coast in 1787-9, claiming that there was a practicable north-west passage south of 69.5° N. Mackenzie's first voyage showed the impossibility of this, and Vancouver's survey of the coast proved the absurdity of the contention.

Leaving the encampment Mackenzie now moved

with his followers towards the river, and came into the part of it since known as Mackenzie's Outlet. He soon had further evidence of the hostility of the Indians and found that it arose from the incitement of the Indian who constantly spoke of "Macubah" and "Bensins." One day one of the rascals seized Mackenzie from behind, but the stalwart leader shook him off. The approach of some of Mackenzie's followers caused a hasty retreat on the part of the assailants. Irritated by the forwardness of the Indians the explorer went to the village, and courageously demanded articles which they had stolen and a supply of fish. These demands were met, and the supplies were paid for. The exploring party designated the hamlet of these miserable beings, "the rascals' village."

On July 23rd the ascent of the river was begun on the return voyage. Much discontent, however, prevailed among the members of the party. They were irritated and tired by the hardships through which they had passed. But there was no help now for their condition. Having embarked they began their tedious journey by having to pull themselves up the rapid river by the branches of the overhanging trees.

After two days of fatiguing travel the party arrived at a village where the medical skill of the leader had been exerted upon the sick son of the chief. The youth had died and now the blame was being put upon Mackenzie. Signs of hostility were shown

as the explorers approached the village. The chief sought to avoid the leader. Brought face to face with him the old man threw a purse, which had been stolen from the whites, fiercely at Mackenzie. A gift of cloth and of knives, however, restored the peace which had been broken. On the next day the party arrived at what they had called the "friendly village," and their treatment here was most kindly. Mackenzie gives a somewhat detailed account of the life and language of the friendly villagers.

Thus with stirring incidents the journey was continued, until, on August 13th, they reached the lofty mountains which all travellers see in coming from the coast to the Rockies, "perpendicular as a wall, and giving the idea of a succession of enormous Gothic churches." The mountains closely hemmed in the party. On the sixteenth the height of land was gained which separates the Columbia from the Peace River, and "on the following day," the narrator says, "we began to glide along with the current of the Peace River." With monotonous sameness the journey continued, the chief interruption being, as before, the *portage de la Montagne de Roche*, though the killing of a buffalo there supplied the hungry travellers with a very acceptable change of food. For seven days they continued their descent of the eastern slope of the mountains until they reached the neighbourhood of the fort at the forks of the Peace River. In the words of the leader himself: "At length, as we rounded a point and came in view of the fort, we

threw out a flag, and accompanied it with a general discharge of our firearms, while the men were in such spirits, and made such an active use of their paddles, that we arrived before the two men, whom we left here in the spring, could recover their sense to answer us. Thus we landed at four in the afternoon at the place which we left on May 9th. Here my voyages of discovery terminate. . . . I received, however, the reward of my labours, for they were crowned with success."

Mackenzie did not linger long at the Peace River fort, but hastened back to Fort Chipewyan, and the companionship of his cousin. He had been absent some eleven months in all, and passed the winter of 1793-4 in the solitudes of the north. Mackenzie's nervous system had been somewhat affected by the demands of the hard year of travel and anxiety. He made fitful attempts during the winter to write his journal, but the task was then too great for completion.

In the spring (1794) Alexander Mackenzie, now the successful leader of two great voyages, and the explorer of a vast region of new country, in fact, the first to make the north-west passage by land, journeyed down to Grand Portage, and turned his back upon the upper country (*pays d'en haut*), never to see it again.

CHAPTER X

FAME ACHIEVED AND THE EBBING TIDE

THE time of Alexander Mackenzie's retirement from the upper country became an era of trouble and excitement for the North-West Company. The old lion of Montreal, Simon McTavish, had always borne the reputation of a tyrannical and domineering leader. As years fell upon him he became more and more unpopular, and as he was the moving spirit at headquarters in Montreal, there was a wide-spread feeling that the interests of the wintering partners, as the leading traders throughout the north and west were called, were in jeopardy. The derisive nicknames *Le Marquis*, and *Le Premier*, applied to McTavish are indications of this feeling.

A corresponding spirit of confidence on the part of the winterers may be detected as gathering around Alexander Mackenzie. This no doubt partly arose from self-interest, and the feeling of animosity to Simon McTavish, but it was also a tribute to the ability and capacity of the explorer of the Mackenzie River and of the route to the Pacific Ocean. It was certainly remarkable that a young man of thirty-one, and one whose fur-trading experiences had been

mostly in the frozen north should thus rise so soon into prominence and influence. Yet so it was.

It was his duty now, having left the upper country, to take a leading part in the great annual gathering at Grand Portage. To this gathering McTavish rarely came. No doubt the presence of Mackenzie would serve as a rallying-point for discontent, as the young trader had belonged to the minor company, which had united with the greater in 1787. The desire to separate from the old company and be free of the intolerable control from Montreal showed itself at Grand Portage in 1795. Several traders left the old company and cast in their lot with "Forsyth, Richardson & Co.," the rival of *Le Premier*. Though Alexander Mackenzie could not extricate himself from the affairs of the old company, yet his sympathies were plainly with the discontented. If Simon McTavish was the impetuous Ajax, Mackenzie was Achilles sulking in his tent.

The new North-West Company perfected its organization in 1795-6, and gave great evidences of vigour and pluck. To Lake Superior, to the Red River, to the Assiniboine and Swan Rivers, and to far distant Athabaska, it brought back the memories of the fierce days of 1783, when Mackenzie made his great dash for the English River. The new company was called the X.Y. because the bales of the North-West Company being marked N.W., these were the next letters of the alphabet. Its work prospered, though it must be confessed that more heartburning

and unfair competition resulted; and greater use of strong drink, as an agency in dealing with the Indians, was made than ever before or since in the fur trade. With the sympathy, possibly with the hidden assistance of Alexander Mackenzie, the "Little Company" or X.Y.'s, undoubtedly made great headway, and, somewhat arrogantly, built their emporium at Grand Portage, in 1797, within half a mile of the chief establishment of the North-West Company.

At the annual gathering Alexander Mackenzie stated his intention of withdrawing from the old company. The utmost plainness of speech was indulged in by many present about *Le Marquis*, and much ill-feeling shown. Mackenzie proved firm in carrying out his intention, and, leaving the company, set sail for home. It was shortly before this time that he seems to have had an opportunity of coming within the shadow of the court of St. James having been chosen to be the travelling companion in Canada and the United States of Edward, Duke of Kent, the father of our late Queen Victoria. No doubt this gave him some claim to notice in England.

We have seen that in the year when Mackenzie returned from the Pacific coast expedition he sought to prepare the materials for giving to the world an account of his two great voyages. His cousin, Roderick McKenzie, had the pen of a ready writer, and it is generally believed that he gave him much help in preparing his journal. Others attach little importance to this suggestion, inasmuch as the

journal, being very much of the nature of a log, shows little literary merit. Going to England, arrangements were at once made for its publication.

The book[1] appeared in 1801, and obtained a very favourable reception. From the time of old John Hakluyt, the Puritan prebendary of St. Paul's Cathedral, who made a collection of English and other voyages, the English people have dearly loved books of travel. From the Earl of Selkirk's own lips we learn that it was this book which first called his attention to Rupert's Land, and led him to lay the foundation of his colony on the Red River.

A great tribute to Sir Alexander Mackenzie's work comes from an unexpected quarter. William Mackenzie, of Gairloch, an old friend of Sir Alexander, wrote in 1856 a very interesting letter to Sir Alexander's son, the heir of Avoch. It is given to me by the family, though it once before appeared in the appendix of one of R. M. Ballantyne's smaller works. It is as follows :—

" Leamington, May 24th, 1856.

" When in Stockholm in 1824, Lord Bloomfield, our minister there, did me the honour of presenting me to the king—Bernadotte, father of the present king of Sweden. At the king's special request the audience was a private one, and I was further especially requested to oblige by coming in my full

[1] *Voyages from Montreal on the River St. Lawrence, through the Continent of North America to the Frozen and Pacific Oceans: in the years 1789 and 1793.*

Highland dress. The audience lasted fully an hour. Such an interest did Napoleon's first and most fortunate marshal take in everything which was Highland, not even the skean dhu escaped him, etc., etc. I now come to your family portion of the audience.

"As we chatted on, (old Bernadotte, leaning upon my o'keachan, claymore) he was pleased to say, in that *suaviter in modo*, for which his eagle eye so fitted him, 'Yes, I repeat it—you Highlanders are deservedly proud of your country and your forefathers, and your people are a race apart, distinct from all the rest of Britain in high moral as well as martial bearing, and long, I hope, may you feel and show it outwardly by this noble distinction in dress. But allow me to observe, sir, that in your family name and in the name *Mackenzie* there is a very predominant lustre, which shall never be obliterated from my mind. Pray are you connected in any way with Sir Alexander Mackenzie, the celebrated North American traveller, whose name and researches are immortalized by his discoveries in the Arctic Ocean and of the river which since then does honour to his name?'

"I informed His Majesty that as a boy I had known him well, and that our families and his were nearly connected. This seemed to give me still greater favour with him, for familiarly putting his hand on my shoulder brooch, he replied that, *on that account alone*, his making my acquaintance gave him greater satisfaction. He then proceeded to tell Lord

Bloomfield and me how your father's name had become familiar to him and so much valued in his eyes.

"He said that at one time Napoleon had arranged to distract the affairs of Britain by attacking her in her Canadian possessions; not by a direct descent upon them, but by a route which would take England quite by surprise and prove infallible. That route was to be of the Mississippi, Ohio, etc., up to our Canadian border lakes. For this arrangements were to be made with America—New Orleans occupied as a *pied-à-terre* by France, etc.

"'The organization and command of this gigantic enterprise,' as Bernadotte said, 'was given to me by the Emperor with instructions to make myself master of any work which could bear upon it, and the facilities the nature of the country afforded. Foremost among these the work of your namesake (Sir Alexander Mackenzie) was recommended, but how to get at it, with all communication with England interdicted, all knowledge of English unknown to us, seemed a difficulty not easily to be got over. However, as every one knows, my then master, *L'Empereur*, was not the man to be overcome by such small difficulties. The book, a huge quarto, was procured through smugglers, and in an inconceivably short space of time most admirably translated into French for my especial use. I need hardly add with what interest I perused and reperused that admirable work till I had made myself so thoroughly

master of it that I could almost fancy myself (this he said laughing heartily) taking your Canada *en revers* from the upper waters, and ever since I have never ceased to look upon the home and think of the author with more than ordinary respect and esteem.'

"After a short pause and a long-drawn breath, almost amounting to a sigh, accompanied by a look at Bloomfield and a most expressive '*Ah, mi lord, que des changements depuis ces jours-là!*' Bernadotte concluded by saying that the Russian campaign had knocked that of Canada on the head until Russia was crushed, but it had pleased God to ordain it otherwise—'*et maintenant me voilà Roi de Suède*' (his exact words as he concluded these compliments to your father). So much for old recollections of my sunny days of youth.

"Yours faithfully,

"Wm. Mackenzie

"(Gairloch)

"To George Mackenzie, Esqre.,

"Avoch."

Miss Mackenzie, of Fortrose, the granddaughter of Sir Alexander, sends word to the writer:—"We have the French edition of Sir Alexander Mackenzie's travels, on which the following is written in an old hand, 'Napoleon's copy from St. Helena.' It is also stamped with the French eagle. This book contains an engraving of Lawrence's portrait of Sir Alexander, and also a map, showing his travels in

1789." This copy was sent to the Mackenzie family by an old friend from the continent.

Another notable circumstance in the life of the successful explorer was his acquaintance in Canada with the Duke of Kent, the father of our late Queen Victoria. The duke had, in 1792, and for a few years afterwards, been stationed in Canada and Nova Scotia, and becoming acquainted with Alexander Mackenzie had honoured him with his favour, and had afterwards kept up a correspondence with the fur trader. After coming to Britain Sir Alexander was further honoured in being at times a travelling companion of the duke.

Now that Alexander Mackenzie had become famous as the writer of so valuable and interesting an account of his voyages, and had the favour of one so high in the affairs of state as the Duke of Kent it was not surprising that the honour of knighthood should be conferred by the king on the modest and courageous explorer.

Honoured by royalty, appreciated by the English public, and, as we have seen, known upon the continent as a successful explorer who had written a history of the fur trade, we can readily imagine that on his visit to Montreal in the year after the publication of his work he was received with open arms by the citizens. The opponents of Simon McTavish, and all discontented souls were ready to welcome him as a rival to the heady old *Marquis*.

He was immediately put at the head of the X.Y.

Company, which he had formerly secretly aided, and which sometimes bore the name of the new North-West Company. His prestige and influence at this time may be seen in the fact that this company was very often spoken of as "Sir Alexander Mackenzie & Co." The vigour of the little company under the new leader stirred up the old "Emperor" at Montreal, and in 1802 he reorganized the North-West Company after a most marvellous fashion. He not only extended the agencies of the fur company to the South Saskatchewan and the Missouri, but also rented the "posts of the king," as the trading-stations on the lower St. Lawrence were called, and actually carried the war into Africa against the Hudson's Bay Company by establishing Nor'-West posts on Hudson Bay—a thing utterly unheard of in North-West Company annals.

The zeal inspired in the old company by its master mind was amazing, and no doubt the bold policy of *Le Marquis* would have come out victorious, but in 1804 Simon McTavish died, all his projects fell to the ground, the obstacles to union of the two Canadian companies were removed, and the breach, which had extended from 1796 to 1804, was healed. The intense rivalry now ended, the degrading methods of plying the Indians with strong drink were repressed, and an impulse to trade was given, as seen in the building of new forts, notably Fort Gibraltar, on the site of the present city of Winnipeg in the year after the union. The new fort at the mouth

of the Kaministiquia, built a year or two before this happy union, but never christened, was now Fort William, named after the Hon. William McGillivray, a noted man in the old company.

Sir Alexander Mackenzie was not only a leader in the fur trade, but his abilities called for his recognition in the public affairs of Lower Canada. He was chosen representative in the legislative assembly by the English-speaking county of Huntingdon; but parliamentary affairs were not to his taste, and he soon resigned his new honours and position, and in 1808 returned to Scotland to take up his abode there, and spend his remaining years, though he had only reached the age of forty-five.

The old trader, although retired from the atmosphere of beaver and pelts, still took an interest in the fur trade. In the year 1811 Lord Selkirk, a British nobleman, undertook his scheme of emigration to the banks of the Red River, and in order to do so purchased a large quantity of stock in the Hudson's Bay Company. This scheme was strenuously opposed by Sir Alexander Mackenzie, who had purchased a sufficient quantity of the stock to take part in the company's affairs. When the first ship with Lord Selkirk's emigrants was leaving Stornoway for America, it is stated by Miles Macdonell, the commander, that strong and unfair opposition was offered to the departure of the colonists. Mr. Reid, collector of customs at Stornoway, did all in his power to thwart the emigration movement by

sowing discontent in the minds of the settlers. Inasmuch as the collector's wife was an aunt of Sir Alexander Mackenzie, it was natural that it should be said that this opposition was inspired by the retired explorer himself.

In the year after this affair (1812) Sir Alexander's marriage took place. Geddes Mackenzie, who became his wife, was one of the most beautiful and gifted of Scottish women. She was of the blood of the clan whose name she bore :

> " McKenneth, great Earl of the North,
> The Lord of Loch Carron, Glensheil and Seaforth,"

and was a true scion of the clan whose leader fought for James IV at Flodden, Queen Mary at Langside, and James II, who created Mackenzie Marquis of Seaforth and Earl of Mar in 1715. This clan raised the 72nd and 78th Highland regiments. Geddes Mackenzie's grandfather was Captain John Mackenzie of Castle Leod, who married his cousin, and purchased the property of Avoch in Inverness-shire; her father was George, a prosperous merchant of London, and he was the last Mackenzie of Gruinard. She was also a close relative of the Mackenzies of Gairloch.

Miss Geddes Mackenzie brought with her the property of Avoch in her own right, and this was after their marriage transferred to Sir Alexander. To them there were born two sons and one daughter. The eldest was Alexander George, born February 14th, 1818, and the daughter bore her mother's name,

Geddes. Alexander George was the father of the present George Mackenzie, of London, of Alexander Isabel and Geddes Margaret, unmarried sisters, who live at the Deanery, Fortrose, and two other sons.

After his marriage Sir Alexander took much interest in agriculture in the neighbourhood of his property, and his grandson says: "On his return to Avoch he carried out many real improvements in the neighbourhood, building the wall which now protects the road between Avoch and Fortrose from the sea, and laying down an oyster bed in the Bay of Munlochy, which was worked successfully for many years."

Very unexpectedly, on March 12th, 1820, Sir Alexander Mackenzie died. Returning home from a journey to London he was taken ill in the coach at Mulnain in Perthshire, and died there. The body was taken on to Avoch, and buried in the family enclosure in the churchyard.

Thus suddenly his career was closed at the age of fifty-seven. His wife survived him forty years.

CHAPTER XI

THE INDOMITABLE THOMPSON

ONE of the points of interest in studying the history of western exploration is the ever-varying characteristics of the great pathfinders. Nevertheless, though they differed, sometimes radically, in their mental, moral, and physical equipment, they were all one in responding to the overpowering urge to adventure into new lands, and to tear aside the veil that hid the unknown. That was the compelling motive in each case, notwithstanding the fact that some of them carried out their discoveries with the active support of the fur-trading corporations of which they were members, while others achieved results in spite of the active or passive opposition of their superiors. It was this passion for exploration, a passion that has made possible the far-flung empire of Great Britain, that marked these men as Makers of Western Canada.

Of all the western pathfinders, none perhaps had more singular characteristics than David Thompson. As in the case of La Vérendrye, no portrait, if one ever existed, has survived, but we are fortunate in having a description of Thompson's physical appearance at the age of fifty, after he had retired from the west. Dr. John Bigsby, in

his entertaining book of travels "The Shoe and Canoe," describes the explorer as he saw him for the first time at a dinner party at the home of William McGillivray, of the North West Company, in Montreal. "He was plainly dressed, quiet, and observant. His figure was short and compact, and his black hair was worn long all round, and cut square, as if by one stroke of the shears, just above the eyebrows. His complexion was of the gardener's ruddy brown, while the expression of his deeply-furrowed features was friendly and intelligent, but his cut-short nose gave him an odd look. His speech betrayed the Welshman. I might have been spared this description of Mr. David Thompson by saying he greatly resembled Curran the Irish orator."

Bigsby and Thompson were closely associated on the boundary commission for some time, and the former learned to hold Thompson in great respect and admiration. "No living person," he says, "possesses a tithe of his information respecting the Hudson's Bay countries. Never mind his Bunyan-like face and cropped hair, he has a very powerful mind, and a singular faculty of picture-making. He can create a wilderness and people it with warring savages, or climb the Rocky Mountains with you in a snow-storm, so clearly and palpably that only shut your eyes and you hear the crack of the rifle or feel the snow-flakes melt on your cheeks as he talks."

DAVID THOMPSON

In the minutes of the Grey Coat School, Westminster, for the year 1784, appears this entry: "On the 20th of May, David Thompson, a mathematical boy belonging to the Hosp[l] was bound to the Hudson's Bay Company & the Treas[r] then paid Mr. Thos Hutchins, Corresponding Secretary to the said Company, the sum of five pounds for taking the said boy appren[ce] for seven years." This was one of the turning points in the career of David Thompson. His was a personality that inevitably would have asserted itself and made its mark upon the world, in whatever path fate had directed his footsteps, but in all probability, had not the Hudson's Bay Company intervened, he would have lived his life on the other side of the Atlantic, and he would not then be remembered to-day as one of the greatest of Canadian explorers.

Born in the parish of St. John the Evangelist, Westminster, on April 30th, 1770, of Welsh parents, he was entered in the Grey Coat School at the age of seven. Here he developed a remarkable taste for mathematics and navigation, and, though the school could boast of but a few antiquated text-books, he so mastered their contents that when the Hudson's Bay Company sent in a request for four boys trained in navigation, he was one of two selected.

He sailed from London in May, 1784, in the H.B.C. ship *Prince Rupert*, and arrived at Fort Churchill, on Hudson Bay, early in September.

Fort Prince of Wales had been captured two years before by the French admiral La Perouse, and Thompson was early initiated into the discomforts of life in the far north, as the traders at Churchill had to spend the winter in hastily constructed huts, with so inadequate a supply of firewood that they could afford fires only in the early morning and the evening, keeping themselves from freezing during the day by continuous exercise whether indoors or out. Samuel Hearne, who had made the famous journey to the mouth of the Coppermine, and who had so ingloriously surrendered Fort Prince of Wales to the French, was still in charge of the post. Thompson, it is said, had an opportunity of reading the manuscript of his expedition, and one can readily conceive how it must have fired the imagination of the ambitious boy.

The following year he was sent down the coast on foot, with two drunken Indians, to York Factory. It meant a journey of one hundred and fifty miles through a country that was almost continuous marsh, and they had to live on such wildfowl as might be shot by the way. At York Thompson came under the jurisdiction of Humphrey Marten, a tyrannous old man who made life miserable for everyone about him. In July, 1786, the boy escaped from his unpleasant situation by being sent inland as a member of a party to establish trading posts on the Saskatchewan.

For the next eleven years Thompson was busily engaged in opening up new fields for fur-trading, building posts at strategic points, and exploring the country between the Saskatchewan and Lake Athabaska. Although too conscientious to neglect the business of his employers, his heart was in geographical discovery, and he lost no opportunity of exploring new water routes which would be of advantage to his company and at the same time add to the sum of human knowledge.

His work brought him into close contact with the Indians, and with his customary thoroughness he began to enter in his voluminous diaries—diaries and journals that he kept methodically for many years, and that to-day are treasured in the Ontario archives—particulars as to their manners and customs, their traditions, and vocabularies of their languages. He began, too, to earn among the tribes that reputation for friendliness and fair play as well as firmness that was to stand him in good stead in more than one emergency. The Indians were shrewd judges of character, and they had faith in the word of Koo-Koo-Sint, as they called him, "The man who looks at the stars."

In 1790, Thompson was fortunate enough to spend the winter at Cumberland House, on the Saskatchewan, with Philip Turnor, a competent astronomer and surveyor who had been sent out by the Company. Turnor was to survey the im-

mense territories of the Hudson's Bay Company. He actually covered only a very small part of them, but he did what was much more important, he gave David Thompson the opportunity he had hitherto lacked of equipping himself with technical knowledge for his life's work.

During the following decade Thompson added more than one important water route to the map, but his most significant achievement was his survey of a new thoroughfare from the Churchill to Lake Athabaska. In June, 1796, he started out from Fairford House on the Churchill, with two Indians and a meagre equipment in a birchbark canoe. Making their way up Reindeer river and around the west shore of Reindeer lake, they crossed over to Wollaston lake by way of a series of small streams and marshes, and down Black river to Lake Athabaska.

The return journey was one to try the mettle of the explorer. Black river was of a character to deserve its name. In tracking the canoe up one of the rapids, below which there was a twelve-foot fall, the line got entangled in the overhanging branches of a tree. Thompson was in the canoe at the time, and as it was in imminent danger of overturning, he cut the rope and went down over the waterfall. He managed to pull himself ashore, but his foot was injured. The canoe was recovered in a damaged condition, as well as the explorer's instruments and maps, his gun and axe, but they

were practically destitute alike of provisions and clothing—and several hundred miles of barren country lay between them and the nearest trading post.

Nevertheless they patched up the canoe, and struggled forward day after day against the stream, living on berries and two or three young gulls they were lucky enough to find in a nest. When they had been reduced to the last stages of exhaustion they were fortunate enough to fall in with a party of Chipewyans, from whom they procured enough provisions to carry them back to Fairford House.

For some time Thompson had been carrying on his surveys under extremely discouraging conditions. The authorities of the Hudson's Bay Company in England had evidently awakened to the importance of exploring the interior, but the man in authority on the spot, Joseph Colen, who had succeeded Marten in charge of York Factory, had entirely other views. To his mind surveys were a mere waste of time, and while he professed to be carrying out the instructions of his superiors, he actually placed every possible obstacle in the way of Thompson's work.

Finally, the explorer decided that it was idle to hope for any effective support in the service of the Hudson's Bay Company, and in May, 1797, he resigned and made his way down to Grand Portage on Lake Superior, where he offered his

services to the North West Company. Alexander Mackenzie and William McGillivray were there at the time, men of liberal views and broad ambitions, and they eagerly accepted his offer.

In fact, Thompson arrived at a most opportune moment. The forty-ninth parallel of latitude had been fixed as the boundary between Canada and the United States west of the Lake of the Woods, and it had become necessary to remove any of the Company's trading posts which might lie south of this line. It was also desirable to know if the source of the Mississippi lay south or north of forty-nine.

The necessary surveys were entrusted to Thompson, and he was also instructed to examine and map other waterways, to visit the Mandan Indians on the Missouri and persuade them to come north and trade with the Company, to search for fossil bones of prehistoric animals, as well as anything in the nature of native monuments. This was a pretty big programme, but it filled the explorer with joy. At last he had entered the service of a company that had some appreciation of the value of scientific work, and he threw himself into his new duties with characteristic energy and thoroughness.

One must pass very lightly over Thompson's minor explorations, details of which the reader will find in his own intensely interesting narrative, edited with skill and scholarly thorough-

ness by J. B. Tyrrell for the Champlain Society. Thompson made his way inland by way of Pigeon river and a series of small waterways to Rainy lake and the Lake of the Woods, thence down Winnipeg river to the lake of the same name, through the Dauphin river to Lake Manitoba and Lake Winnipegosis, and a few miles up Swan river to Swan River House of the North West Company

Here, as always, he made a careful survey of his route, and kept accurate notes and sketches for the great map of northwestern America which he already had in contemplation. That map was afterwards completed, and hung for years in the main hall of the Company's post at Fort William. He had hoped to have it published, and there is extant in the public archives at Ottawa a copy of a printed prospectus he had prepared, but because of lack of public interest or for some other reason the map never appeared in print, although the results of Thompson's surveys were incorporated, not only in his lifetime but long afterwards, in official and other maps of America, without the slightest acknowledgement to the man who had laboured for many years and endured countless hardships and dangers to secure the information.

Continuing his surveys, Thompson travelled down the Assiniboine from its source to its mouth, and, taking his departure from Assiniboine House,

at the mouth of the Souris, he made an overland journey to the Mandan villages on the Missouri, which La Vérendrye had visited half a century earlier.

Thompson set out toward the end of November, 1797, with a party of nine men. His guide and interpreter was René Jussaume, a famous trader frequently mentioned in western journals from McDonnell of the North West Company to Lewis and Clark. It is characteristic of Thompson's faculty for making the best use of the material at his hand, that he makes no complaint in his narrative of this man who is described by his contemporary, Alexander Henry, in these uncomplimentary terms: "He retains the outward appearance of a Christian, but his principles, as far as I could observe, are much worse than those of a Mandane; he is possessed of every superstition natural to those people, nor is he different in every mean, dirty trick they have acquired from intercourse with the set of scoundrels who visit these parts, some to trade and others to screen themselves from justice."

The journey was a difficult and dangerous one. The thermometer dropped at times to thirty-six degrees below zero, with high winds and drifting snow, food scarce and fuel practically unobtainable; and the fierce Sioux were known to be on the watch for any party of white traders who might attempt to cross their territory. Nothing

daunted, the explorer pushed forward, and after travelling some thirty-three days finally reached the Mandan villages, on the banks of the Missouri.

Of this tribe we get a very interesting account in the narrative of La Vérendrye, the first white man to visit them, whose description is practically confirmed by later travellers such as Lewis and Clark. The village La Vérendrye visited stood in a commanding position, admirably suited to defence, and was surrounded by a ditch fifteen feet deep by from fifteen to eighteen wide. It consisted altogether of one hundred and thirty lodges, built much more substantially than was customary among any of the tribes with which the French were acquainted. The streets and squares were clean and well-kept; the ramparts level and broad. The palisades were supported on cross-pieces mortised into fifteen-foot posts. The houses were ingeniously constructed and commodious, with many conveniences not usually found among the Indian tribes.

Everything was of native design and workmanship, as up to the time of La Vérendrye the Mandans had had no intercourse with Europeans, and very little had filtered through the neighbouring tribes. Altogether La Vérendrye was struck, as David Thompson was later, by the comparatively high degree of intelligence displayed by the Mandans. His description of their appearance, dress,

manners and customs, ceremonies, games, etc., may very well be compared with those of Thompson, Lewis and Clark, Catlin and Prince Maximilian of Wied. They were modified much less than one might suppose by their intercourse with white traders in the interval. Thompson's own account is not so full as some of the other travellers, because he was at the time interested in other matters, such as the determination of the position of the villages, and the importance of persuading them if possible to come north and trade at the Company's posts on the Assiniboine, as the British Company could not establish a post in their country.

The following year Thompson accomplished another important task with which he had been charged—the determination of the source of the Mississippi. Descending the Assiniboine and the Red rivers, he determined the point where the international boundary crossed the latter river, and continued on south to a post on the same river then under the charge of one Baptiste Cadotte, member of a well-known fur-trade family.

From here he set out in March for the Mississippi, but found the going so intolerably bad that he was forced to return—one of the very few occasions when David Thompson had to acknowledge himself beaten by physical obstacles. A few weeks later he made a fresh start. It was still extremely difficult travelling, by canoe or other-

wise, through a country that was an almost continuous marsh with many patches of broken ice. He finally reached Turtle lake, which he believed to be the source of the Mississippi. While it was afterwards decided that Lake Itaska, a few miles distant from Turtle, was the ultimate source of the great river, for all practical purposes Thompson was correct, and his was at least the first scientific determination of the upper waters of the Mississippi.

From here he travelled through the same difficult country to the headwaters of the St. Louis river, and down that stream to a post then maintained by the North West Company at Fond du Lac, where the city of Duluth stands to-day. Patching up an old canoe, Thompson and his men made the complete circuit of Lake Superior, and arrived at Grand Portage early in June, 1798. He had met Alexander Mackenzie and William McGillivray at Sault Ste. Marie and reported to them the results of his surveys. They told him that he had accomplished as much in ten months as other men might have expected to do in two years.

CHAPTER XII

DISCOVERY OF THE UPPER COLUMBIA

THE better part of another decade was spent in preparation for what was to be Thompson's most notable achievement as an explorer and surveyor. From 1798 to 1804 he was engaged in the forested country about the upper waters of the North and South Saskatchewan, the Athabaska and the Peace, developing the trade of the North West Company, and gradually equipping himself with knowledge for the ambitious project of establishing trade among the tribes on the Pacific side of the mountains. In this period he also took unto himself a wife, the daughter of Patrick Small, then in charge of the Company's post at Ile a la Crosse.

The subject of mountain passes through the Rockies presents a very interesting study, but only certain phases of it can be considered at this time. There are a dozen or more passes north of what is now the international boundary, but most of them were discovered after the days of David Thompson. The three which became known while he was in the west are the Peace, Athabaska and Howse.

Alexander Mackenzie, as we have seen, was the

first white man to make his way through the Peace River Pass, in 1793. While Thompson may not have been the first white man to travel over either Howse Pass or Athabaska Pass, the honour of discovery is properly his. He planned the various expeditions that prepared the way for the discovery of the passes, and they were carried out either under his own leadership or by men acting under his directions. The men who actually preceded him through each pass were his agents, acting under his directions; and our actual knowledge of both passes is derived from Thompson's journeys and surveys.

Peace River Pass differs from other passes through the Rockies in that the river here rises at a considerable distance west of the mountains and flows through them without interruption except by two small rapids, one at the west and the other at the east end of the pass. Athabaska Pass is altogether different. Journeying through it from the east the traveller ascends the Athabaska river to the point where the Whirlpool flows into it, and turns up that turbulent stream, or rather its valley, for the river itself is practically unnavigable, to its source at the summit of Athabaska Pass. The ascent on the east side is comparatively easy, but on the Pacific side it drops abruptly to a valley which leads to the great bend of the Columbia. Howse Pass is similar in character to Athabaska Pass, the route leading

from the upper waters of the North Saskatchewan over the pass and down to the Columbia. These last two passes are closely associated with the story of David Thompson and his western explorations.

Many years before, when he was still in the employ of the Hudson's Bay Company, he had wintered with the Piegan Indians in the Bow River country. The Piegan belong to the Blackfoot confederacy. Our earliest account of them comes from Anthony Hendry, of the Hudson's Bay Company, who spent some months with them in the winter of 1754-1755, thirty-two years before Thompson's visit. Their home seems to have been at an earlier period in the wooded country to the north-east, and for some generations they had been pushing their way toward the mountains. In Hendry's day they had for some time been accustomed to the use of horses, and learned to depend largely upon the buffalo for their subsistence. Buffalo were found in incalculable numbers in the plains and foothills of what is now southern Alberta, and for the possession of this rich country the Piegan and their confederates the Blackfoot and Blood Indians carried on a relentless warfare with the Kootenay and other mounted tribes. Finally, having obtained firearms from white traders, they succeeded in driving their enemies over the mountains. The Kootenay made homes for themselves in the

valley of the upper Columbia and its great tributary the Kootenay. Forced to bow to the persuasion of superior weapons, they did not submit tamely to the loss of their ancient hunting-grounds, but waited patiently for an opportunity to retrieve their fortunes.

Thompson found much to interest him in the manners and customs of the Piegan, and formed an enduring friendship with some of their leaders, particularly with their war chief Kootanae Appee. This friendship was to have important consequences in the years with which we have now to deal.

For several years Thompson, who was now stationed at Rocky Mountain House, on the upper waters of the North Saskatchewan, waited for a chance to lead his men over the mountains to the valley of the Columbia. The Piegan had got wind of his intention, and made it abundantly clear that they would not permit anything of the kind. They were perfectly aware that their ascendancy over the Kootenay and their control of the buffalo country depended upon the fact that they were equipped with firearms while their enemies were not. The Kootenay, they knew, had never become reconciled to their exile from the eastern plains, and if Thompson were permitted to cross the mountains and trade with the Kootenay, the latter would very soon acquire firearms and learn to use them, and their own superiority would at once disappear. Under the circumstances

one can hardly blame them for objecting to Thompson crossing the mountains and establishing posts in the Kootenay country. No doubt Thompson realized, and perhaps even sympathized with, the point of view of the Piegan, but he had too keen a sense of duty to allow that to influence him; and even apart from his loyalty to the North West Company he had other and more important motives drawing him to the west side of the Rockies. There was much important work to be done there in the way of exploration and survey, and he was the man to do it.

Finally his opportunity came. The Piegan had been for some time watching the passes to prevent Thompson slipping through, but a more pressing duty finally called them away. Some of their warriors had been killed in a skirmish with Lewis and Clark, the American explorers, on the upper Missouri, and a war party had been hastily formed to avenge their death. Thompson at once took advantage of the absence of the Piegan, equipped his men with provisions and trading goods, and led them by way of Howse Pass to the banks of the Columbia, where he built the first trading post in that part of the country. This was in 1807. Thompson tells the story in his autobiography, but one finds a more complete account in his manuscript "Narrative of the Establishment on the Sources of the Columbia," in the Public Archives of Canada.

From this journal we learn that in June he made his way up toward the pass, and waited as patiently as he could for the snow to melt at the summit. The weather was still very severe, with violent wind storms. The roar of avalanches was almost continuous. The peaks were generally hidden behind clouds. In chance intervals of fair weather, Thompson geometrically measured the height of three neighbouring mountains, and found them to be 4,707, 5,200 and 5,089 feet respectively above their bases. Several other peaks that were visible he estimated to be from 500 to 700 feet higher. "Considering," he remarks, "their very elevated situation on the globe, they fall little short of the most celebrated in height above the level of the ocean."

It is rather extraordinary that David Thompson, who was one of the most accurate and painstaking of surveyors and astronomers, should have been so very wide of the mark in his estimates of the heights of Rocky Mountain peaks above sea level. Some years later he made the same mistake in ascertaining the height of the mountains in the neighbourhood of Athabaska Pass. The error, it will be observed, was not so much in the height of the mountains themselves, as in the height of their bases above sea level. The elevation of Howse Pass is 5,020 feet above the sea. The peaks in the immediate vicinity are approximately five thousand feet above the pass. Thompson, therefore,

was substantially correct as to the heights of the mountains from their bases, but he was very far from the truth when he said that "they fall little short of the most celebrated in height above the level of the ocean." For some unexplained reason he seems to have arrived at an elevation of about ten thousand feet for both Howse Pass and Athabaska Pass. The latter is actually 5,736 feet.

"Wearied with waiting," says Thompson, "and anxious to proceed, contrary to the opinion of everyone, I set off with Bercier, my guide, to examine if the portage was passable." By portage he means the pass. "We started very early on two good horses and by 10 a.m. we were at the head of the defile or ravine, where the springs send their rills to the Pacific Ocean. This sight overjoyed me." In his brief account of the same momentous journey, in his autobiography, Thompson adds: "May God in his mercy give me to see where its waters flow into the ocean, and return in safety." The explorer's pious wish was amply fulfilled.

They continued down the Pacific side of the pass for some miles. The going was very bad, and the guide advised against attempting to get the party through. Thompson thought otherwise, and sent back word to bring up all the horses with the provisions and supplies. His entire stock of food amounted to only 220 pounds of pemmican. This, with the trading goods and baggage, was

loaded on ten horses. There was little chance at that time of the year of adding to their stock of provisions. Also, their route down the Blæberry to the Columbia was almost impassable for loaded horses. Altogether, it seemed a very hazardous enterprise, but David Thompson had the faculty of overcoming physical obstacles, and the equally invaluable gift of inspiring confidence in those who followed him.

"We began to proceed down the brook," he says, "a man with myself going before and clearing the way for the horses as much as circumstances would permit. Rarely, or never, could even the trace of a road be discerned. As the weather was very fine the snow on the mountains melted, and the water, descending in innumerable rills, soon swelled our brook to a rivulet, with a current foaming white. The horses with difficulty crossed and recrossed every few hundred yards, and the men crossed by clinging to the tails and manes of the horses, and yet ran no small danger of being swept away and drowned."

Day after day they fought their way down the valley, sometimes wading through ice-cold water, at others cutting a way through thick bush, hungry but unconquered. "Here," says their leader in his diary, "is a hard day's work, at the end of which we found ourselves only about one and three-quarter miles from whence we had set out this morning." Finally, after six days' strenuous effort,

they found themselves on the banks of the Columbia.

Thompson now set to work to build canoes to transport his men and supplies. In these some of the party embarked, while others were left to bring the horses up the banks of the river. About the middle of July they arrived at what is now known as Lake Windermere. Exhausted and half-starved, they set nets, but without success. Game was almost unobtainable. The carcass of a wild horse was discovered. It was tainted with decomposition, but they all tried it, with disastrous results.

A small party of Kootenay arrived, from whom they obtained a little meat. This and a few berries kept them from actual starvation, but among the many problems with which Thompson was confronted not the least urgent and difficult was that of feeding his men and himself, in a country that at this time of the year was almost destitute of game, and whose lakes and rivers seemed equally destitute of fish.

Notwithstanding their weakness, Thompson and his men managed to put together a temporary trading post. Some time later a better site was found, and a strong fort was built of heavy fir, with a stockade and bastions, all ball-proof and capable of withstanding any Indian attack.

Thompson was extremely anxious to explore this new and interesting region which he had

discovered, but he dare not leave Fort Kootenay. The situation was critical. Provisions were very scarce; it was necessary to drive into the minds of the Kootenay Indians the importance, if the post was to be maintained in their country, of keeping it supplied with provisions and skins; and at any moment a hostile party of Piegan might appear upon the scene to further complicate the situation. Thompson had no one he could trust to do the right thing in his absence, and was therefore reluctantly compelled to abandon, for the present, all thought of further exploration. The temptation was made more acute by the appearance of a party of Indians who offered to show him the way to the country of other and more remote tribes.

Shut off from discovery, he devoted himself to gathering furs, and among others collected about a hundred skins of the mountain goat. These, with their long white silky hair, he thought would prove a novelty in the London market, and when the packs were made up in the spring of 1808 he sent them over the mountains and down to Montreal. His partners in the North West Company were not so shrewd, and wrote him ridiculing the idea. However, the furs went over to London, where they were snapped up at a guinea a skin, and half as much more was offered for another lot. The partners now realized that they had been wrong, and wrote Thompson to procure as many

as possible. Here is his answer: "I returned that the hunting of the goat was both dangerous and laborious, and for their ignorant ridicule I would send no more." And he kept his word.

A small party of Piegan had already appeared at the fort, but after remaining for a few days had gone off again without making any trouble. Thompson had now to deal with a more serious visit. The Piegan had met in council and had determined to send a war party of forty men under a secondary chief to destroy the trading post and its garrison. They appeared before the gate, which was well barred. Thompson had six men with ten guns. The fort and the bastions were pierced with large auger holes. The Piegan remained for three weeks, without daring to attack. Kootanae Appee, against whose advice the party had been sent, had publicly warned its leader that he must take no risks with his men.

Thompson had a small stock of dried provisions and by putting the men on rations he managed to make it do. The Piegan thought they could drive the whites to surrender for lack of water, as the fort stood on a steep bank twenty feet above the river. Thompson, however, had another trick up his sleeve. At night he let down a couple of large kettles each holding four gallons, and drew up ample to supply their needs. Finally, finding Fort Kootenay a harder nut to crack than they

had expected, and learning that a number of the Kootenay were approaching, the Piegan raised the siege and returned to their homes east of the mountains.

The return of the war party without scalps exasperated the Piegan. Another council of war was held. The Civil Chief, Kootanae Appee's rival, harangued the warriors and urged that a strong war party should be sent to finally crush both the white traders and the Kootenay. "We must do it now," he said, "before the Kootenay learn the use of firearms and become too powerful for us." That was shrewd advice, and he cunningly added that the war party should be under the leadership of Kootanae Appee.

Kootanae Appee coolly observed: "If it is the will of the tribe I shall lead them to battle, but remember that we cannot smoke to the Great Spirit for success. It is now about ten winters since we made peace with the Kootenay. They have tented and hunted with us. Now, because they have guns and iron-headed arrows we must break our word of peace with them. Be it so. Let the warriors prepare. In ten nights I will lead them over the mountains." About three hundred warriors assembled, and crossed over to the banks of the Columbia, where they camped about twenty miles from Fort Kootenay.

Meanwhile scouts had been sent by another route to report on the strength of the fort and the

state of its little garrison. Thompson, who thoroughly understood the situation, brought them into the fort and saw to it that they were impressed with its impregnability. The following morning two Kootenay arrived. They glared at the Piegan like tigers. The explorer took the Piegan aside, drew from them all the particulars he needed as to the whereabouts of the war party and its strength, and incidentally learned that his friend Kootanae Appee was in charge, and that they had exhausted their supply of tobacco. Then pointing to the Kootenay, he told them that he could no longer protect them from the fury of their enemies, and, loading them with several feet of tobacco and a fine pipe as presents to the chiefs and warriors, he told them to be off.

He afterwards learned that the two scouts went as fast as they could travel to the camp of the war party, where the chiefs were in council, delivered their message, and laid the presents at the feet of Kootanae Appee. The war chief exclaimed: "What can we do with this man! He knows everything that we do! Our women cannot mend a pair of shoes but he sees them!" Then, thoughtfully picking up the pipe and tobacco, and laying them down on the ground before the other chiefs, he said: "What is to be done with these? If we proceed, nothing of what is before us can be accepted." The native sense of honour would not permit them to accept a

gift from one they were about to attack, as of course Thompson had been well aware.

The eldest of the other chiefs gazed long and wistfully at the tobacco. At length he said: "You know me, who I am, and what I am. I have attacked tents, and I am ready to do so again; but to fight against logs of wood, that a ball cannot go through, and with people we cannot see, and with whom we are at peace, is what I am averse to. I go no farther." He then cut a piece of tobacco, filled the pipe, fitted the stem, and handed it to Kootanae Appee, saying: "It was not you that brought us here, but the foolish Sakatow (the Civil Chief), who himself never goes to war." They all smoked the pipe of peace, and returned across the mountains, very much to the satisfaction of Kootanae Appee. "Thus," comments Thompson, "by the mercy of good providence I averted this danger."

Having convinced the Piegan that they would be wiser not to meddle with him, at least in the Kootenay country, and having put the affairs of the fort upon a satisfactory basis, Thompson was free at last to carry out the work that seemed to him, and that actually was, of infinitely more importance than the gathering of furs. With tireless energy and skill he followed the course of the Columbia, and its great tributary the Kootenay, from source to mouth; surveying and mapping the country with such care and thoroughness that it

has been said that even up to the present day this work of David Thompson, carried out considerably over a century ago with imperfect instruments and under conditions that were always difficult and frequently dangerous, remains without a rival. If he had carried out nothing more than this one consummate piece of scientific exploration, Thompson would deserve to be remembered as a great pathfinder and surveyor; but this was but a single outstanding step in a lifetime of fine achievement.

In the autumn of 1810 the Piegan, who had never forgiven Thompson, made a determined and successful effort to block his passage through Howse Pass. This second trial of wits between the white explorer and his Indian antagonists developed into such a dramatic episode that it is worth describing at some little length, the more so as it brings out very clearly the qualities that made David Thompson one of the greatest of western explorers. The story is drawn from Thompson's own narrative, and from that of his friend and contemporary in the fur trade Alexander Henry.

Thompson had come up the Saskatchewan with canoes loaded with trading goods for the posts west of the Rockies. As they approached the mountains, he, with William Henry and two Indian hunters went on ahead to secure game for the party. Arrived at the rendezvous, they put

the meat on a stage out of reach of animals, and sat down to wait.

When the day fixed for the arrival of the canoes had gone by without any sign of them, and the next also, Thompson grew alarmed, and sent William Henry down to look for them. Henry returned and reported that he had seen a camp of Piegan, and some distance below had found a place where the *voyageurs* had defended themselves against the Indians. Henry had been foolish enough to fire a gun, and thus aroused the suspicions of the Piegan. Thompson was, therefore, forced to abandon his provisions and ride for his life.

His purpose was to make a wide circle and by striking the river some distance below get into touch again with his men. His way lay through a country encumbered in every direction with fallen timber, and the Piegan would have overtaken him without difficulty but for the fact that snow fell and covered the tracks, thus retarding the progress of the Indians. About an hour later, as they afterwards told Thompson, they came upon three grizzly bears sniffing at the trail. Thompson had long since been credited with supernatural powers, because of his constant use of such mysterious instruments as the sextant and compass, and the Piegan were now convinced that the three bears had been left there by the explorer as a rear-guard to defend him from pursuit. Feeling it

foolhardy to interfere with such a powerful medicine man, they took the hint, and returned to their camp. Thompson continued on his way, and the following day found his men at a deserted post, about forty miles down the river.

From them he learned that when they were about to set out from Rocky Mountain House, a party of Indians arrived, and Alexander Henry, who was in charge of the post, did not dare to let the canoes go until he had lulled their suspicions with rum. Just as this difficulty seemed to have been overcome, Henry saw to his dismay a party of Hudson's Bay Company men arriving from down stream.

This was an almost more serious problem than that presented by the Indians, as the white men were rival traders, and would hesitate at nothing to outwit their opponents. Henry had now to play the generous host to both white and red guests, and his perplexities were increased by the fact that the Hudson's Bay Company men insisted on pitching their tents close to the river, making it all the more difficult for him to get his party off without being seen.

Finally in the dead of night, after the last of his unwelcome guests had retired to sleep off the effects of heavy potations, the harassed trader succeeded in loading the canoes and sending them away on their journey. But he was not yet rid of

the *voyageurs*, for the following day they appeared again, having been stopped and turned back by Black Bear, a chief of the Piegan.

Thompson must now decide upon his future course. It was of the utmost importance that he should get the trading goods and supplies over the mountains. The Piegan had effectively blocked Howse Pass. The only alternative was to attempt to get through by way of Athabaska Pass. It was a desperate enough expedient at any time to attempt to take a heavy consignment of goods through the mountains by an untried pass, but the risk was doubled by the fact that the journey must be made in midwinter. Perils that would have daunted most other men, however, only seemed to make David Thompson more determined to win through in spite of them.

It was the latter end of October when the explorer with his party of twenty-four men and an equal number of horses, loaded with trading goods, baggage and provisions, started north along the foothills. They made slow progress, as there were practically no trails and the ground was covered with fallen timber. Also this large company had to depend mainly on four hunters for their food. Many a night, after a hard day's travel, the entire party had to go hungry to bed. Sometimes they were more fortunate. One day's journal records the killing of two fat buffalo and a young grizzly bear. Another day they had to be

content with a single antelope. Often enough the hunters came in with nothing.

A month's hard travel brought them to the banks of the Athabaska, up which they made their way for several days. It was now the fourth of December, and as it was too late in the season to attempt to make the pass with horses, Thompson decided to build log huts and put his men to work making snowshoes and dog sleds, while he sent down to one of the trading posts for dogs. Here he remained for twenty-five days, while the temperature dropped to twenty and thirty below zero, and the hunters scoured the surrounding country for game.

A few days after Christmas, all preparations having been completed, Thompson and his men left their temporary quarters and started on the dash over the pass to the Columbia. It must have been a stirring sight as the long train of dogs and sleds, each followed by a shouting *voyageur*, wound its way up stream, sometimes on the frozen surface of the river, sometimes travelling through the woods that covered its banks.

Thompson thoroughly appreciated the many good qualities of the *voyageurs*, but it sometimes exasperated him to witness their voracious appetites. Himself an abstemious man, he grew impatient over what seemed to him a deliberate waste of precious provisions. The *voyageur*, he says, "has the appetite of a wolf, and glories in it. Each

man requires eight pounds of meat per day or more. Upon my reproaching some of them with their gluttony, the reply I got was, 'What pleasure have we in life but eating'!" But he is fair-minded enough to add, "these same hardy Canadians can live upon as little as any other person, when the necessity arises."

The first of January, 1811, the hunters were fortunate enough to kill two young buffalo and a mountain sheep. The next few days were spent in camp, hunting and preparing dried meat for the last stage of the journey—up the valley of the Whirlpool to Athabaska Pass, and down the steep Pacific side to the Columbia. January the fifth, they were off again, eight sleds loaded with goods and provisions. Thompson had brought three horses with him so far to help with the loads, but he left them behind at a meadow on the banks of the Whirlpool. Notwithstanding the bitter cold, he notes, the horses lived through the winter.

"Here," says the explorer, "is a strong belief that the haunt of the mammoth is about this defile. I questioned several; none could positively say they had seen him, but their belief I found firm and not to be shaken." Two days later Thompson's incredulity was almost shaken. "In the afternoon," he says, "we came on the track of a large animal. I measured it; four large toes each of four inches in length, to each a short claw; the

ball of the foot sunk three inches lower than the toes, the hinder part of the foot did not mark well; the length, fourteen inches by eight inches in breadth; walking from north to south and having passed about six hours. We were in no humour to follow him. The men and Indians would have it to be a young mammoth, and I held it to be the track of a large old grizzly bear; yet the shortness of the nails, the ball of the foot, and its very great size was not that of a bear." He was clearly puzzled, but found no further evidence to enable him to identify the mysterious animal.

January the tenth was a memorable day in Thompson's life. It brought him at last to the summit of Athabaska Pass, where he camped beside that afterwards famous little lake known as the Committee's Punchbowl. Here is his record: "A day of snow and southerly gale of wind. The afternoon fine. The view now before us was an ascent of deep snow, in all appearance to the height of land between the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans. It was to me a most exhilarating sight, but to my uneducated men a dreadful sight. They had no scientific object in view."

As the snow was deep at the summit, and there was little wood to be had there, they cut what they could find below and carried it up with them. This they laid on the snow and built a fire upon it, and around it the tired party sat for a time and

smoked; then each wrapped himself up in his buffalo robe and slept upon the snow.

"About one-third of a mile from us," says Thompson, "lay an enormous glacier, the eastern face of which was quite steep, of about two thousand feet in height. Eastward of this glacier and near to us, was a high steep wall of rock." This was no doubt the mountain later named McGillivray's Rock. "At the foot of this with a fine south exposure had grown a little forest of pines of about five hundred yards in length by one hundred in width. By some avalanche they had all been cut clean off as with a scythe. Not one of these trees appeared an inch higher than the others."

Thompson's men were unhappy. They were overawed by the majesty of the scene about them. Ross Cox, who went through the same pass six years later, tells this story of one of his men: "One of our rough-spun unsophisticated Canadians, after gazing upwards for some time in silent wonder, exclaimed with much vehemence, 'I'll take my oath, my dear friends, that God Almighty never made such a place'!"

"My men," says Thompson, "were not at their ease; yet when night came they admired the brilliancy of the stars, and as one of them said, he thought he could almost touch them with his hand. I set off to examine the country before us, and found we had now to descend the west side

of the mountain. I returned and found part of my men with a pole twenty feet in length boring the snow to find the bottom."

The explorer was over the worst of his difficulties, so far as physical obstacles were concerned, but that night he lay awake for hours thinking over his plans. Provisions were extremely scarce, and many miles had still to be travelled, with heavy loads, before they could reach the nearest post. His men were dispirited, and some of them on the point of mutiny. "Amidst various thoughts I fell asleep on my bed of snow."

Early next morning they began their descent. The way was so steep that the dogs could not control the sleds. They frequently landed against a tree, dog on one side and sled on the other, in a hopeless tangle.

Thompson notes in his journal that a leather bag of balls had been left behind at the summit, or rather had been carried away by a wolverine. Curiously enough a few years ago one of the surveyors employed on the interprovincial boundary work found these balls—left behind by David Thompson more than a century before.

It was extremely heavy going after the explorer reached comparatively level land. The snow was deep and wet, and the dogs floundered in it without making much progress. Finally, on January 26th, they came to the banks of the Columbia. Thompson was anxious to push forward, but his men became

unmanageable, several of them deserted, and he finally decided to remain where he was for the remainder of the winter, and build canoes in the spring to take him down the river. This was the afterwards famous Boat Encampment.

What more need be said of the life of David Thompson can be put in a few words. In 1812 he made his last trip over the pass going eastward. He had decided to retire from the western country and the fur trade. He proceeded down to Fort William, and from there continued his way to Montreal. He settled at a little town on the upper St. Lawrence, where he devoted himself to the completion of his great map of the Northwest. Between 1816 and 1826 he was engaged as a surveyor and astronomer in connection with the international boundary work. He died at Longueuil, near Montreal, in 1857, in dire poverty. He had retired from the fur trade in comfortable circumstances, but a series of unfortunate speculations deprived him of everything.

It has been a reproach to Canadians that they allowed to die in poverty this man who had done so much to make known the geographical features and resources of what is to-day (largely thanks to him) western Canada. The very name of David Thompson meant nothing to the average Canadian a short time ago. Thanks to the scholarly work of J. B. Tyrrell, in editing the autobiography of the great explorer, there is no longer any excuse for

knowing nothing about the man or his achievements. Thanks, also, to the broad-minded generosity of the Hudson's Bay Company and the Canadian Pacific Railway, there stands to-day on the shores of Lake Windermere, near the spot where he built Kootenay House in 1807, a very appropriate memorial to Thompson in the form of a reproduction of a typical trading fort of his day. Since then, memorials have been placed over the explorer's grave in Mount Royal Cemetery, Montreal; and also at the little town of Vérendrye, in North Dakota, to commemorate his overland journey to the Mandans on the Missouri, in 1797.

He would probably wish to be remembered as one who did his duty as he saw it, who served God and his country to the best of his ability. Many good men have done that, but not many have achieved more for their country than David Thompson.

CHAPTER XIII

SIMON FRASER AND THE TACOUCHE TESSE

SIMON FRASER is remembered because of one great and gallant exploit, and that exploit gains additional distinction by reason of the fact that it was carried through at the risk of his life, not for the sake of personal fame but because he had been told to do that particular thing, and nothing could turn him from his purpose.

Fraser was born at Bennington, Vermont, in or about the year 1776. His father had fought under Burgoyne at Saratoga. After his death, his widow removed to Canada with Simon who entered the service of the North West Company at the age of sixteen, and served in nearly every department of its far-flung territories, from Grand Portage to New Caledonia, now British Columbia.

Of his life and adventures up to the year 1807 very little is known, as the only journal of his that has survived begins in that momentous year, and our only other source of information is the journals of his contemporaries, where occasional references are found to Fraser and his activities. It is known that, in 1805, he crossed the mountains by the Peace River Pass, and ascended the Parsnip river to a lake which he named after Archibald

Norman McLeod of the North West Company. A trading post was built on the shores of the lake, bearing the same name.

The following year, accompanied by John Stuart, he ascended the Parsnip to its upper waters, and by way of Giscome portage reached the Fraser, which he descended to the mouth of the Nechaco. Paddling up the Nechaco, and a tributary since known as Stuart river, they came to a lake, which also bears the name of Fraser's companion. Near the outlet of the lake a trading post was built, afterwards known as Fort St. James.

Here Fraser came into contact with an important tribe of New Caledonia known as the Carriers. The Carriers were very much astonished to see the white men blowing smoke from their mouths, and respected them, for a time at any rate, as superior beings gifted with supernatural powers. One of Fraser's men, noting the enjoyment with which the Carriers ate the most repulsive fragments of fat, thought to play a trick on one of the squaws by offering her a piece of soap. To his astonishment the squaw not only ate the soap, but appeared to thoroughly appreciate its novel flavour. She was a little puzzled, however, to find two streams of soapsuds flowing out of the corners of her mouth.

Fraser and Stuart carried out important explorations in what is now northern British Columbia, but their great adventure came in 1807. In the spring of that year, Jules Maurice Quesnel and Hugh

Faries arrived from Fort William with instructions to Fraser to explore the Tacouche Tesse to its mouth. It will be remembered that this same year David Thompson was crossing the mountains to the Columbia. The Tacouche Tesse, which Mackenzie had descended for some distance in 1793, was still believed to be the Columbia, and Fraser and Thompson were engaged in the same task of securing this important territory for the North West Company, and incidentally for the British Crown. Two years before Lewis and Clark had crossed the mountains from the upper waters of the Missouri to the Columbia, and descended that river to its mouth, and it was known that John Jacob Astor was formulating plans for trading establishments on the latter river.

Fraser lost no time in making his preparations. Descending the Nechaco to its mouth, he built there a post which was named Fort George in honour of the King. This became the starting point of the expedition down the tumultuous river that was afterwards to bear the name of its plucky explorer and conqueror.

Fraser was fortunate in his lieutenants, Stuart and Quesnel. Both were men of courage, energy, and resourcefulness, and Stuart particularly possessed the technical knowledge which Fraser lacked and which made possible the survey of the river, so far as it could be surveyed under the extremely difficult conditions of travel. They left

Fort George on May 28th, with nineteen *voyageurs* and two Indian guides, in four canoes.

They were not long in discovering the nature of the stream on which they were embarked. Fifteen miles below Fort George they ran into a canyon where one of the canoes was nearly wrecked. The following day Fraser thriftily cached a quantity of dried salmon, the staple food of that part of the country, in case they should run out of provisions on the return journey. They camped for the night at the mouth of a river which was named after Quesnel. A small town bearing the same name stands on the spot where Fraser made his camp.

On May 30th, they passed the farthest point reached by Mackenzie. From here onward Fraser was travelling through country which no white man had yet seen. He had nothing but the confused accounts of natives to guide him in his passage down the stream, but what he did hear would have been sufficiently disquieting to any man of less intrepid character. The story was ever the same. The river was absolutely unnavigable, and it was nothing short of madness to attempt it. Before long the native accounts received ample confirmation, and it needed all Fraser's iron will and powers of leadership to keep his men to their unwelcome and exceedingly dangerous task.

As they proceeded, native houses appeared here and there on the banks, and they could see Indians

on horseback racing away with news of the strangers to the villages below. Making for shore Fraser was fortunate enough to find a boy who understood a little of the Carrier language, and through him he learned that the chief of his tribe, the Atnahs, lived a few miles farther down the stream.

This chief proved to be a friend in need. He was well known to the tribes below, and volunteered to accompany the expedition in spite of the dangers it must encounter. That these dangers were very real became clear the same afternoon. After running several minor rapids, they came to one that was much more formidable than any they had yet seen. For two miles the river rushed through a narrow gorge where the cliffs rose sheer from the water's edge. It was practically impossible to carry the canoes overland, and it was decided to attempt the gorge.

Five picked *voyageurs* manned a light canoe, and pushed out into the current. They rode the first cascade in safety, but the men then lost control. Drawn into an eddy the canoe was whirled about like a leaf, while the crew were helpless to do more than keep her afloat. Down the rapids they flew, missing jagged rocks by a hair's-breadth, over the breakers, skimming the rocky walls. Finally, the canoe crashed against a low, projecting rock. The men sprang out and managed to hold her, while Fraser and his companions rushed to their assistance.

How to reach them was a problem. The bank was high and very steep, and the rescuing party had to drive their daggers into the face of the cliff to check their speed. When they finally got down to the canoe, an even more difficult situation presented itself. It was extremely important to save the canoe and baggage, but how? The only possible way was to drag everything up the face of this perpendicular bank.

Steps were cut in the wall with their daggers; a line was fastened to the bow of the canoe; some of the men scrambled to the summit with the line, while the rest supported it on their shoulders. As they drew and pushed it up, their lives hung upon a thread. One false step, or the breaking of the line, would hurl some or all of the party into the furious waters beneath. With infinite labour, however, and the utmost care, they managed, before nightfall, to work the canoe up to the top of the cliff, and both it and the baggage were finally brought safely back to the head of the gorge.

Fraser was a man of almost reckless courage, but he was not a fool. It was clearly impossible to get through the gorge. He refused to abandon the expedition. There remained only one alternative—the seemingly hopeless task of portaging canoes, baggage and provisions to the foot of the gorge. And after superhuman exertions it was accomplished. Here the natives again warned the

explorer that the river was impracticable, and advised him to leave his canoes in their charge and march overland to the banks of a great river that lay off to the south-east (afterwards named the Thompson), which flowed into the Fraser, and by which he could escape all the dangerous portions of the main stream. The plan looked inviting, but it had one defect which to this man was fatal. His instructions were to trace the Fraser to the sea, and that he was determined to do at all costs.

On Sunday, June 4th, they came to a point where the river seemed to be entirely shut off by an immense precipice, known to-day as Bar Rock. Below this they ran several minor rapids, and reached one which apparently was a succession of vast whirlpools. Here it was a physical impossibility to carry the canoes overland, and it was decided to take them down light. The hazardous enterprise was fortunately carried through without misadventure.

But the packs must now be brought down by land. The only passage lay along the face of a huge precipice, where loose stones and gravel offered a peculiarly insecure footing. One of the men, leaving the path, managed to get himself into a very perilous situation. With a large pack on his back he became so entangled in the rocks that he could move neither backward nor forward, nor yet unload himself without imminent danger.

Seeing his predicament, Fraser crawled on hands and knees to the spot and managed to cut the thongs that held the pack, dropping it over the precipice into the river. For a couple of miles their way lay along this perilous trail, and before they reached the lower end of the rapid the shoes were worn from their feet, and they arrived bruised, bleeding, and utterly exhausted.

Five days later they came to an even more formidable rapid. "Here," says Fraser, "the channel contracts to about forty yards, and is enclosed by two precipices of immense height which, bending towards each other, make it narrower above than below. The water which rolls down this extraordinary passage in tumultuous waves and with great velocity had a frightful appearance. However, it being absolutely impossible to carry the canoes by land, all hands without hesitation embarked as it were *a corps perdu* upon the mercy of this awful tide.

"Once engaged the die was cast. Our great difficulty consisted in keeping the canoes within the medium or *fil d'eau*, that is, clear of the precipice on one side and from the gulfs formed by the waves on the other. Thus skimming along as fast as lightning, the crews, cool and determined, followed each other in awful silence, and when we arrived at the end, we stood gazing at each other in silent congratulation at our narrow escape from total destruction."

So, as has been said elsewhere, the story goes day after day; a tale of almost incredible hardship and danger; running unknown rapids, where nothing but the marvellous instinct of the *voyageur*, or simple good fortune, saved the party from destruction; toiling painfully over long portages, with heavy packs, up and down steep hills and around dizzy precipices, feet bruised and swollen from contact with sharp rocks and sharper thorns. There were times when they had to climb by means of frail, swinging Indian rope ladders, up the faces of perpendicular walls, with heavy packs on their backs. One false step, a momentary weakening in will power, or the parting of a strand in the half-rotten ladder, and they would be dashed on the rocks far below. A good deal has been written in disparagement of the French-Canadian *voyageur*, of his laziness, his greed, his ignorance, his bombast; but after all, a man who could travel day after day, with a laugh or a song, under such conditions as these, might be forgiven many even graver faults.

On the tenth, convinced at last of the impracticability of proceeding any farther in canoes, Fraser abandoned them, cached all the heavier articles, made up the remainder into eighty-pound packs, and set forth on foot for the sea. He summed up his impression of the region he had been travelling through in these words: "I have been for a long period among the Rocky Mountains,

but have never seen anything like this country. It is so wild that I cannot find words to describe our situation at times. We had to pass where no human being should venture; yet in those places there is a regular footpath impressed, or rather indented, upon the very rocks by frequent travelling."

About the middle of June they reached the point where the Thompson flows into the Fraser. Here the chief men of a village of what he calls the Askettih tribe came out to meet them, dressed in what Fraser describes as coats of mail. The head chief harangued them in his own language; Fraser replied in his; and three successive interpreters were needed to convey the meaning of what each had said to the other. Here the explorer had the satisfaction of learning that from this point the river was navigable to the sea. Subsequent experience disclosed the fact that this information should have been taken with a grain of salt. The river was navigable below the Thompson in a much more real sense than it could be said to be above the Thompson, but, as anyone knows who has seen it from the window of a transcontinental train, it is still a long way removed from a placid stream.

Procuring a canoe from the Askettih, Fraser loaded the heaviest packs in it, with Stuart and two natives to navigate the craft, while the remainder of the party tramped forward on foot.

Among the first Indians Fraser encountered were some equipped with a copper kettle and a large gun, which he thought probably came from the Russian traders farther up the coast.

On the 19th of June, they came to a village of the Hacamaugh. The chief took Fraser by the arm and led him up the hill to the village. "Here his people were sitting in rows to the number of twelve hundred, and I had to shake hands with the whole! Then the great chief made a long harangue, in the course of which he pointed to the sun, to the four quarters of the world, and then to us. He afterwards introduced his father, who was old and blind, and carried by another man, who also made a harangue of some length. The old blind man was placed near us, and he often stretched out both his hands through curiosity in order to feel ours."

Two days later one of the men had an extraordinary escape from drowning. Running one of the rapids the canoe in which he was paddling upset. His two companions managed to get clear and swim ashore, but this man went under with the canoe and stuck between the thwarts and the bottom. Finally, he managed to work his way out and, half-drowned, crawled up on top of the overturned vessel which had drifted into comparatively quiet water.

"Here," he says, "I continued astride the canoe, humouring the tide as well as I could with

my body to preserve my balance, and, although I scarcely had time to look about me, I had the satisfaction to observe the two other canoes ashore near the eddy, and their crews safe among the rocks. In the second or third cascade the canoe plunged from a great height into an eddy below, and striking with great violence against the bottom, split in two. Here I lost my recollection, which, however, I soon recovered, and was surprised to find myself on a smooth, easy current, with only one-half of the canoe in my arms."

He floated down through rough water until the current carried him into an eddy at the foot of a steep precipice. Utterly exhausted, he lost his hold; a large wave washed him up among the rocks, and another hoisted him clear on shore. When he recovered consciousness, he managed, somehow, to climb up the almost perpendicular face of the cliff and regained his companions. He had drifted, in an upturned canoe, for three miles through a succession of rapids, cascades, and whirlpools, and by extraordinary good fortune had lived to tell the tale.

The last day of the month they reached the mouth of the Coquihalla, where the town of Hope stands to-day. In the distance they could see a high mountain, which the natives called Stremotch, and which we know now as Mount Baker. Fraser heard from the Indians of white men who were said to have ascended the river thus far some

time before. He and his men camped in the midst of a grove of huge cedars, some of them five fathoms in circumference, but their interest in these was spoiled by the mosquitoes which surrounded them in clouds. Also, their provisions were exhausted and they had to go supperless to bed.

Evidence that they were now approaching the sea multiplied. At the mouth of the Coquihalla they had seen seals. The tide rose two and a half feet. The following day they were regaled by the natives with dried oysters, and the same people assured them that they might reach the sea the following day. Fraser's task was nearly completed, but, like Mackenzie, he was still to have trouble with the natives at the eleventh hour. As they approached a point where the river divided into several channels, he noticed that a number of Indians were following him in canoes, flourishing their arms and singing war songs. Finding the white people unimpressed with their demonstrations, they thought better of their meditated attack, and retreated up stream.

Continuing their way down one of the channels, Fraser came within sight of a gulf or bay of the sea which the Indians called Pas-hilroe. It contained, he says, several high and rocky islands, whose summits were covered with snow. There is some confusion here. Fraser no doubt saw distant mountain summits covered with snow.

"On the right shore," he says, "we noticed a

village called by the natives Misquiame. "We directed our course toward it. We landed but found only a few old men and women, the others having fled into the wood at our approach. The fort is 1,500 feet in length and ninety feet in breadth. The houses are in rows." This village still exists, under apparently the same name, a few miles from the city of Vancouver, and within a short distance of the mouth of the river.

Having spent some time examining the place, Fraser and his men were about to embark, but the tide had ebbed and left their canoe high and dry. While they were dragging it down to the water, the natives took courage and ran out of the woods in every direction, dressed in what the explorer calls "coats of mail," howling like wolves and brandishing their war clubs. Before they could attack the party, however, Fraser managed to get the canoe afloat and pushed out into the stream.

Continuing down toward the mouth of the river, he came to a second village, but did not think it prudent to land. As he had no provisions, and it was improbable that he could obtain any from the coast Indians, he turned up stream to a friendly village. On the way they were annoyed again by the people of Misquiame, who followed in their canoes and threatened the "whites" with their weapons, but were intimidated by Fraser's coolness. They were finally got rid of without bloodshed. Fraser had hoped to return the follow-

ing day, but the hostile attitude of the natives and the uneasiness of his men made it unwise. He expresses in his journal his "great disappointment in not seeing the main ocean, having gone so near it as to be almost within view." He had hoped, also, to obtain an observation for longitude. The latitude he found was nearly 49°. He was, of course, a little north of 49°. As the entrance of the Columbia was known to be 46°20′, it was clear that the river down which he had travelled with so much difficulty and danger was not the Columbia. This was, as can well be imagined, a bitter disappointment to the explorer.

The return journey up the Fraser was long and tedious, but it was completed without serious misadventure, and on August 6th Fraser was back again at Fort George.

He retired from the service of the North West Company before the coalition of 1821. It is said that he was offered a knighthood, but declined the honour. He spent the evening of his days at the little town of St. Andrew's, on the St. Lawrence, and died there in 1862. While the sum of his achievements as an explorer is hardly comparable to that of David Thompson or Alexander Mackenzie, he did add materially to the sum of geographical knowledge, and contributed in no inconsiderable degree to Great Britain's effective claim to the immensely valuable region that is known to-day as British Columbia.

LORD SELKIRK

From the painting ascribed to Raeburn at St. Mary's Isle, Scotland

LORD SELKIRK

CHAPTER I

A YOUTHFUL PHILOSOPHER

THE name and titles of the Earl of Selkirk are firmly attached to a number of localities in the Canadian West: a town and county of Manitoba, a range of mountains in British Columbia, a fort on the Yukon River, and an island in Lake Winnipeg, all bear the name of Selkirk; a part of the city of Winnipeg called Point Douglas, where originally stood Fort Douglas, preserves to this day the family name of the great colonizer. The ruins of a fort near the international boundary, known as Fort Daer, long remained to recall one of the titles of the noble house of Selkirk.

The man who thus impressed himself upon so vast a region was no common man, and the story of his life is worthy of a place in the treasure-house of Canadian and British worthies.

Thomas Douglas, fifth Earl of Selkirk, Baron Daer and Shortcleugh, was a scion of one of the oldest Scottish noble families. As the writer has said elsewhere, "The intrepidity of the Douglases, the perseverance of the ancient family of Marr, and the venturesomeness of the house of Angus, were all his inheritance by blood. Back nineteen generations, and not less than seven hundred years be-

fore his time, Theobald, the Fleming—the Selkirk ancestor—scorned the quieter pleasures of home, and went to seek his fortunes among the Saxon people of old Northumbria, bought himself a new home with the sword, and the lands of Douglas were granted him because he had won them honourably."

Time does not permit to tell the deeds of Theobald's great grandson, Sir William Douglas, the hardy man who joined the unlucky Wallace, and suffered death for it, and of Sir William's grandson, the grim Sir Archibald. James, the second earl of Douglas, who fell fighting against the Percy, was the brave hero of the battle of Otterburn. It was his dying boast that "few of his ancestors had died in chambers." Good Sir James Douglas lived in the days of the Bruce, distinguished himself at Bannockburn, and figured in the attempt to carry the heart of King Robert to Jerusalem. These might suffice for a group of ancestors of remarkable distinction, but there was also that other famous man, Archibald, "Bell the Cat," the Earl of Angus, whose courage and resource have become watchwords in history.

With such heroic blood in his veins our great colonizer was born, being the seventh son of Dunbar, fourth Earl of Selkirk. He was born in June, 1771, at St. Mary's Isle, the earl's seat at the mouth of the Dee in Kirkcudbrightshire, Scotland. At the age of fifteen young Thomas Douglas

went to the University of Edinburgh, and there pursued his studies till he was nineteen. His college days gave promise of an energy, resourcefulness, and ability which were to urge him to great achievements in his later days. With Walter Scott he was a member of "The Club," a small society of ardent literary spirits. The earl, young Thomas's father, was a broad-minded man, who showed favour to rising genius, and patronized Robert Burns. It was at St. Mary's Isle that Burns, on being entertained, extemporized the well-known "Selkirk Grace" found in his poems.

On another occasion the poet Burns, a guest at Ayr of Dugald Stewart, the great metaphysician, there met Lord Daer, an older brother of Thomas Douglas, and was so captivated by him that he wrote a poem concerning him, in which he says:—

> "Nae honest, worthy man need care
> To meet with noble, youthful Daer,
> For he but meets a brother."

Amongst the companions of Thomas Douglas in the little club of nineteen in Edinburgh were men afterwards greatly distinguished: William Clerk, of Eldin, Sir A. Ferguson, Lord Abercromby, and David Douglas, afterwards Lord Reston.

At the close of his college career, the young nobleman, who had a great sympathy for the downtrodden and oppressed, found his way to France, and was disposed, like many British Liberals, to extend his approbation to the leaders of the French

Revolution. It may be of interest to give here a letter written by him to his father, the Earl of Selkirk.

"Dear Father,—We are all here very quiet, tho' your newspapers have probably by this time massacred half of Paris. The disturbance of which Daer gave you an account is completely settled. The measure M. de la Fayette took of breaking one of the mutinous companies of the Garde Soldée was indeed much criticized in the Groupes of the Palais Royal, but the ferment is blown over, and will probably be put out of their heads by the Avignon business. I was at the National Assembly the whole three days they discussed it (one of which they sat 12 hours). It is carried by a great majority that they are not to unite it at once to France as the Jacobins wished.

"I have no more time as the post is just going.

"Yours,

"Thomas Douglas."

On his return from France young Thomas Douglas went, as seems to have been his custom during his college course, to spend his summer in the Highland straths and valleys. He had become extremely fond of the Highland people, and although a Southron learned the Gaelic language.

In 1797, on the death of his brother, Lord Daer, young Douglas, who was then the sole survivor of the family of seven sons, was made Baron Daer

and Shortcleugh, and two years afterwards, on the death of his father, he became Earl of Selkirk. His youthful enthusiasm was now, at the age of twenty-eight, very great, and the wealth and influence placed at his disposal as a British earl turned his thoughts to benevolent and noble projects.

It was now the beginning of the nineteenth century, and all the accounts of that period agree in saying that there was great distress among the British people.

The sympathetic heart of the philanthropic young man had been touched by the sufferings of his Highland countrymen. The Napoleonic wars had been especially hard upon the Highlands, but an economic wrong also set on fire the Highland heart. Men can be found in Canada to-day whose indignation rises when the "Highland Clearances" of the early years of the nineteenth century are mentioned. The "Clearances" were the result of a policy adopted by the great landholders of the north of Scotland to diminish the large number of small crofts or holdings, and to make wide sheep runs for rental to a few proprietors, who with larger capital might better develop the resources of their estates. This policy could not fail to bear heavily upon the poor. The Highlander has a passionate attachment to his native hills, and his shielan, poor as it is, is his home. In the lament of the Highlanders, it was said in their Gaelic idiom that "a hundred smokes went up one chimney," meaning

that only one house now stood where a hundred had formerly been seen.

The heart of the young earl was deeply touched, and he forthwith laid plans for a systematic emigration policy which should bring relief to his unfortunate countrymen, and to the suffering people of the neighbouring island of Ireland. Our next chapter will treat in greater detail of the earl's schemes of emigration; suffice it now to say that these are embodied in his most elaborate work on emigration,[1] to which we shall again refer.

There seems to have been a spirit of marvellous enterprise in Lord Selkirk which expressed itself in plans and projects of improvement, and in discussion of public affairs of the greatest moment. To a patriotic Briton the first decade of the nineteenth century gave abundant cause for anxiety. Napoleon, with "Europe-shadowing wings," threatened at any moment to swoop down on the British Isles. The attempt of the French fleet to land at Bantry Bay in Ireland in 1796 had been trifling enough, but now Napoleon's added allies made him far more formidable. Accordingly Lord Selkirk in his place in the House of Lords, in 1807, laid before his fellow-legislators a plan of defence for the empire. "Every young man," said he, "between the ages of eighteen and twenty-five, throughout Great Britain, should be enrolled and completely trained

[1] *Observations on the Present State of the Highlands of Scotland, with a View of the Causes and Probable Consequences of Emigration.* London, 1805.

to military discipline." His Lordship estimated that of the population of Great Britain and Ireland, then put down as about eleven million, upwards of six hundred thousand were between the ages named and eligible for this purpose. The training would proceed in succession. For three months officers would train one-fourth of those within their districts; and so on with the second quarter, till all would have secured twelve weeks drill in the year. Once a year a general assemblage would take place at a fixed time, and the trained men be kept in form by the drill required. With due regard to the interests of the agriculturists, the beginning of summer would be selected as the time of general assemblage.

This remarkable scheme was developed with a minuteness of detail and a clearness of statement quite wonderful in a man not trained to military affairs. It is a tribute to his acuteness, and to his grasp and foresight, that the main points of the plan he outlined are now in force throughout a great portion of Europe.

In the following year the earl developed his ideas on this subject in a brochure of some eighty pages, bearing the title, "On the Necessity of a more Effectual System of National Defence." In publishing this work Lord Selkirk had the assistance of his kinsman, Sir John Wedderburn, afterwards of the East India Service. It is interesting to note that in republishing this work more than

fifty years afterwards, Sir John could do so, finding it strikingly applicable to the conditions then prevailing.

Sir John, in referring to the Earl of Selkirk, calls him "a remarkable man, who had the misfortune to live before his time." While this may refer to the trials which afterwards overtook Lord Selkirk, we question very much whether His Lordship's schemes were as chimerical and ill-considered as this statement would imply.

This period of Lord Selkirk's life was certainly one of great activity. After his publication of his scheme of defence, he was made a Fellow of the Royal Society, and it was perhaps this circumstance which stimulated his literary activity. In any event we are justified in attributing to him two anonymous works which anticipate his later acknowledged views as contained in his "Sketch of the British Fur Trade in 1806." In these two books, "Observations on a Proposal for forming a Society for the Civilization and Improvement of the North American Indians within the British Boundary" (1807), and "On the Civilization of the Indian in British America" (no date), the author advocates the establishment of schools in which young Indians might be instructed, not only in ordinary branches, but also in industrial pursuits. He would have had certain portions of the country set apart for the Indians alone, he would have had the "legislature applied to for an Act to authorize

the governor of Canada to fix by proclamation the limits of the country reserved for the use of the Indian nations," and he would have secured the total suppression of the liquor traffic, whose ravages among the Indians he describes in startling colours.

We read these details with surprise, for we see them all embodied in the Reserve System, the Industrial Schools, and the law making it illegal to give or sell strong drink to an Indian, in fact, in the main features of the policy carried out so successfully in Western Canada during the last twenty-five years of the nineteenth century. It is unjust to contend that the propounder of such practical ideas lived before his time.

In 1809 Lord Selkirk succeeded in gaining the attention of the public men of his time in a pamphlet published by him, entitled "Parliamentary Reform," which he addressed to the chairman of the committee at the "Crown and Anchor," presumably a Whig organization. The house of Selkirk was Whig, or Liberal, in its views. This may be seen by any one who reads the work mentioned on emigration. The expansive and altruistic spirit shown in the work was quite in harmony with the large-hearted and sympathetic views which we attribute to the writer. But as every student of political science knows, the excesses of the French Revolution, the rancour of political parties, and the evident discontent in the United States that followed the

first generation of democratic rule, chilled the ardour of lovers of liberty in all lands about the beginning of the nineteenth century. Men like Coleridge and Wordsworth, who had looked to the French Revolution to break the chains of tyranny, not only in France but for the whole world, saw with dismay the terrorism of a mob replaced by a great military despotism, and they shuddered at and forsook principles they had formerly advocated.

So with Lord Selkirk. He states to the men of the "Crown and Anchor" that his father and brother had been zealous friends of a parliamentary reform, and that all his early impressions were in favour of such a measure. "He had thought," he says, "that if the representation were equalized, the right of suffrage extended, the duration of parliaments shortened, bribery could scarcely be applied with effect." "But," says he, "I have had an opportunity (in the French Revolution and in a visit to America) which my family never had of seeing the political application of those principles from which we expected consequences so beneficial. With grief and mortification I perceived that no such advantages had resulted as formerly I had been led to anticipate." Lord Selkirk accordingly refused to take part in the proposed agitation, and, indeed, went further and threw in his lot with the reactionary party.

We have thus sought to give a picture of the mental characteristics of this public-spirited philan-

thropist. He was mentally most acute and active, indeed his mind burned itself out in activities and projects that to some seemed visionary. But he was a man of deep thought and large heart. As we look upon the marble bust chiselled by Sir Francis Chantrey, the great English sculptor, now at St. Mary's Isle, we see the indications of intellectual fineness and keenness of mind, as well as of a generous and pitiful heart.

Author, patriot, colonizer, and philanthropist—his enthusiastic devotion to his projects possesses us, and we seem to see the "tall, spare man, full six feet high, with a pleasant countenance," as he came to Helmsdale to bid the Highland emigrants to his colony farewell; as he afterwards stood on the banks of the Red River and apportioned his colonists their lots; as he dealt with the bands of Indians of the West, who sealed a perpetual covenant with him whom they named their "Silver Chief." We shall follow him with interest through the many phases of his eventful though somewhat sorrowful life.

CHAPTER II

FIRST EXPERIMENTS IN EMIGRATION

IN the very year that Wordsworth penned his sonnet of lament for England, and gave forth his cry for help for the British people, Lord Selkirk was deep in contemplation as to how he might relieve their necessities. To him emigration seemed the remedy. He had just read Sir Alexander Mackenzie's journal, and had heard of the district of Red River as being fertile and affording room for a large population. The plan flashed into his mind of being the leader in a pioneer movement of settlement for Rupert's Land which would relieve the distress of crofter, farm labourer, and operative alike, and restore the equilibrium disturbed by war and other disasters.

Accordingly His Lordship, on April 4th, 1802, sent to Lord Pelham, home secretary, a letter and memorial. This has never been published, but through the kindness of the Earl of Kimberley when he was colonial secretary some years ago, a copy was furnished to the writer.

In these documents Lord Selkirk says: "No tract of land remains unoccupied on the sea-coast of British America, except barren and frozen deserts. To find a sufficient extent of good soil in

a temperate climate we must go far inland. This inconvenience is not, however, an insurmountable obstacle to the prosperity of a colony, and appears to be amply compensated by other advantages that are to be found in some remote parts of British territory. At the western extremity of Canada, upon the waters which fall into Lake Winnipeg, and, uniting with the great river of Port Nelson, discharge themselves into Hudson Bay, is a country which the Indian traders represent as fertile, and of a climate far more temperate than the shores of the Atlantic under the same parallel, and not more severe than that of Germany and Poland. Here, therefore, the colonists may, with a moderate exertion of industry, be certain of a comfortable subsistence, and they may also raise some valuable objects of exportation. . . . Some of the British traders have extended their discoveries into a climate which appears well adapted even for the vine, the successful cultivation of which would save immense sums that go every year from this kingdom into the hands of its enemies. To a colony in these territories the channel of trade must be the river of Port Nelson."

Here is the genesis of Lord Selkirk's emigration movement almost a decade before he organized his expedition to enter upon the land to be reached by way of Nelson River. Lord Buckinghamshire, the colonial secretary, did not favour the scheme, "the prejudices of the British people were so strong

against emigration." This is not to be wondered at. Britain was engaged in a great war in which her very existence was at stake. Surely it would be folly to weaken her supply of men. Lord Selkirk, in his book published three years after this letter, combats the arguments against emigration. He especially falls foul of the Highland Society, which had strenuously opposed the removal of the Highlanders from their lands to the New World.

Lord Selkirk was, however, impressed with the thought of relieving suffering, and, in 1803, had organized and carried out his first emigration party. Forbidden by the British government to begin a colony six hundred miles inland from Hudson Bay, on the shores of Lake Winnipeg, he was compelled to content himself with a strip of land on the coast of Prince Edward Island, on the Gulf of St. Lawrence, which could be reached by ship.

In his work on emigration a good account is given of this colony. The unoccupied land extended, on the east coast of Prince Edward Island, for some thirty miles. "Separated by an arm of the sea from any other settlement," he says, "the emigrants . . were placed in circumstances scarcely more favourable than if the island had been completely desert."

Lord Selkirk had intended himself to precede the colonists, and to oversee the preparations made for their reception. This he was unable to do. Eight hundred persons, the greater proportion of whom

were from the Isle of Skye, and a number from each of the shires of Ross, Argyle, and Inverness, with a few from the Island of Uist, made up this pioneer party. They sailed from the British Isles in three ships, and arrived respectively on the 7th, 9th, and 27th August, 1803. On Lord Selkirk's reaching Charlottetown, the capital of the island, he found that the third ship had just arrived, and that the settlers had debarked from the other vessels in the district selected for them.

The selected region had been cleared by the French, who had been driven out in the year before the taking of Quebec, and in the lapse of forty years thickets of young trees had grown up, interspered with grassy glades. This afforded a suitable region for encampment and settlement. The settlers had, in the openings, built for each family a hut of poles, which they had covered over with spruce branches, and in these they were fairly comfortable. The camp had a strange appearance; confused heaps of baggage were everywhere piled up beside the huts; the fires built at night in the open spaces gave a weird appearance to the scene. Lord Selkirk had his tent pitched at the end of the camp, and all seemed to feel that the happy days of clanship were back again, and that the "Clearances" were a thing of the past.

The usual difficulties were experienced. The land was not well surveyed, each family was impatient, and indeed somewhat jealous as to the spot which

should be assigned to it. Certain measurements were absolutely necessary. This took time. Discontent began to arise. Visitors came from the English settlements of the island and started doubts by their advice, and at one time the settlement was nearly broken up. Food rose in price to a high figure, and flour had to be brought from Nova Scotia. Scarcity of food, exposure, and a new climate brought their inevitable consequences, and a contagious fever broke out among the settlers. Fortunately Lord Selkirk had brought with him a competent and clever physician, and through his exertions very few fatal cases occurred.

At the end of three or four weeks from the time of Lord Selkirk's arrival all the allocations had been made, and the land sold at a moderate price —less than one half the price current on the island ; the fever had begun to abate ; and provisions became more plentiful by their importation from abroad by Lord Selkirk's agent. The narrator says : " From the moment the settlers were fixed in their respective allotments of land they were enabled to proceed without interruption in their work."

The zeal of the settlers is recorded to have been remarkable. A father and three sons occupied one lot ; the father, sixty years of age, insisted on being an axeman ; the sons had no resource but to hide the axe, and the aged woodman spared the tree for the best of reasons. An elderly widow and her two sons had taken a claim ; the young men being

absent from home, the octogenarian matron seized the axe and undertook to fell a tree; the return of her sons stopped her well-meant efforts in time to prevent the tumbling monarch of the forest from crushing to the earth their humble dwelling.

The settlement continued to thrive; the people gained courage; they began to love their new home, and two years after their arrival Lord Selkirk says, speaking of the general improvement, "One of very moderate property, who had a small possession in the Isle of Skye, traces his lineage to a family which had once possessed an estate in Rossshire, but had lost it in the turbulence of the feudal times. He has given to his new property the name of the ancient seat of his family, has selected a situation with more taste than might have been expected from a mere peasant: and to render the house of Auchtertyre worthy of its name, is doing more than would otherwise have been expected from a man of his station."

Thus the colony prospered. Probably not less than four thousand people on the island trace their origin to the three shiploads of 1803, while many in different parts of the Canadian West call themselves Lord Selkirk's islanders.

As soon as Lord Selkirk had seen his colonists fairly settled, he visited the United States and Canada. His active mind was taken up with the problems he saw being worked out in the New World, and his patriotic feeling was roused in favour

of the British dependency of Canada. In the United States he found numbers of "families from Scotland and Wales in New England and in the state of New York," who were willing to remove to Canada if favourable terms could be obtained.

Becoming acquainted with the leading men in Montreal and Toronto, Lord Selkirk, with surprising alertness and courage, undertook several large schemes of emigration and development. He purchased a tract of land in the townships of Dover and Chatham, in the western part of Upper Canada near Lake St. Clair. Some twenty families of his Highland colonists from Prince Edward Island were, under the management of Alexander Macdonell, Sheriff of the Home District, placed on these lands and the name of one of his properties—Baldoon—was given to the settlement. A road known as Baldoon Street was cut through to the town of Chatham on the river Thames. Baldoon being situated in a swampy district, did not thrive; the settlers suffered from the fever and ague prevalent in the locality, and afterwards in the War of 1812 had various losses.

From a bundle of papers found in the archives of the Selkirk family, which the writer had the opportunity of perusing, a glimpse of the Earl of Selkirk's energy and determination may be seen. Observing the obstacles to settlement and improvement arising from the want of communication through the country, Lord Selkirk, in 1804, pro-

posed to the government of Upper Canada the building of a main highway from Amherstburg to York (Toronto), a distance of nearly three hundred miles. The cost of this was estimated at £40,000 sterling, and as the province was poor and weak the earl offered Governor Hunter to provide the money required and to accept payment in wild lands on each side of the road when constructed. To those who were familiar with the fearful roads of the western peninsula of Upper Canada even fifty years after this date, the proposal of Lord Selkirk will appear to have been one of great value. The executive council, however, over-estimating the value of the lands, regarded Lord Selkirk's terms as too high and rejected them.

Writing from London, England, in 1805, the Earl of Selkirk proposed to take and settle one of the Indian townships lying near the mouth of the Grand River in Upper Canada. The township of Moulton, valued at between £3,000 and £4,000, seems to have been in the hands of the Earl of Selkirk for a time, but like Baldoon, it was marshy, and so proved unsuitable for immediate settlement, though in later times, after drainage, it proved to be a valuable township.

Undoubtedly Lord Selkirk's experiments in emigration were bravely undertaken, and showed evidence of organizing ability, but they proved unremunerative, as almost all early movements of the kind have done. To-day thriving communities

represent the Prince Edward Island, Baldoon and Moulton settlements. They were the first attempts of one who was yet to take a much higher and wider flight. They but served to make definite and absorbing an ambition which was to become the dominating passion of his life.

CHAPTER III

A DREAM OF EMPIRE

LORD SELKIRK'S first visit to Montreal in 1803 was a notable event. As already mentioned, having seen his body of Scottish emigrants settled in Prince Edward Island he crossed to the United States to examine the problem of settlement in the republic. Here he was distressed to see his countrymen living under a foreign flag, and absorbing the spirit hostile to the mother country so largely prevailing at that time among the first generation of Americans. The thought came to his mind of endeavouring to counterwork this loss to the empire. He was, as we have seen, a man not easily overcome by difficulties, and he bethought himself of the plan already described of founding settlements in Upper Canada and inducing British subjects in the United States to come to these. Some of the Baldoon settlers were actually of this class.

Montreal was at this time the centre of commercial life for Canada. The open mind of the imaginative earl was greatly impressed by what he saw there. He saw his own countrymen, the McTavishes, Mackenzies, McGillivrays, Camerons, and the rest, the magnates of the fur trade and leaders in the public life of Lower Canada. He saw at Ste. Anne and Lachine the arrival and departure of the *voya-*

geurs in their canoes, going and coming over a route hundreds of miles long to Grand Portage, the dépôt on Lake Superior, and this but the introduction to a course thousands of miles further inland to far distant Athabaska. There was a sense of mystery connected with the many Indian tribes of which he heard, and a romantic inspiration in the conception of the rapids and waterfalls and portages of the little-known journey, and in the spectacle of a few hundreds of white men governing a region without law or military force, or even a respectable show of numbers at any one point. All this appealed strongly to the mind of a man of Selkirk's temperament. The impression made upon him was similar to that expressed by Washington Irving in the opening chapter of "Astoria," in which that writer speaks in his now well-known phrase of the "Lords of the North."

The reception given the noble earl by the successful traders of Montreal was distinctly cordial and enthusiastic. His rank, his open-mindedness, and his successful achievement in settling his and their countrymen in Prince Edward Island were well known to them. Masson says of his arrival: "Lord Selkirk was received with open arms in Montreal. His reputation had preceded him, and all regarded it as an honour to be allowed to entertain him. The *bourgeois* of the North-West Company, who held the highest place in the English society of Montreal, and among whom the Scottish

element predominated, were the first to offer him the abundant hospitality for which they were distinguished."

The embodiment of the fur traders' pride and position was the Beaver Club of Montreal. It had been founded some twenty years before Lord Selkirk's visit with less than twenty members, and could only receive new members from officers who had endured the hardships of the interior of the fur traders' country. The appointments of their club house were notable. On their tables silver and glassware, of a kind unknown elsewhere in Canada, shone with resplendent light at their feasts. Each member on such occasions wore an elaborate gold medal bearing the motto, "Fortitude in distress." Bear, beaver, pemmican, and venison were served in the fashion of the Posts, song and dance gave entertainment during the evening, and when wine brought exhilaration in the early morning hours, partners, factors, and traders, in the sight of all the servants or *voyageurs* who happened to gain admittance, engaged in the "*grand voyage*" which consisted in all seating themselves in a row on the rich carpet, each armed with tongs, poker, sword, or walking stick to serve as paddle, and in boisterous manner singing a *voyageur's* song, "Malbrouck" or "A la Claire Fontaine," while they paddled as regularly as the excited state of their nerves would allow.

Some parts of the proceedings did not meet the

taste of the philosophic and high-minded earl, but the motto "*in vino veritas*" came to his mind, and he was given a great opportunity of learning the spirit, objects, and even details of the fur trade which he could have obtained in no other way.

It is stated by Masson that several of the *bourgeois* were suspicious while others were surprised at the persistence with which Lord Selkirk pursued his researches and investigations into the affairs of the fur trade. It has often been stated by the advocates of the case of the Nor'-Westers in the subsequent troubles of the fur trade, that Lord Selkirk played an unworthy part in obtaining detailed information about the fur trade, which he used to the disadvantage of the Montreal company in after years. It has even been said that Lord Selkirk returned to England completely decided to take advantage of the information that he had thus obtained.

We can see no ground for believing this to have been the case. Lord Selkirk's attention arose from the same disposition that led him to interest himself in the poor of his own country and of Ireland; in the question of repatriation from the United States; in the condition of the Indians; and in the defence of Britain from the dangers of a Napoleonic invasion. Minds such as that of Lord Selkirk require material for constant thought, and find satisfaction in discussing such problems and planning useful enterprises. The enthusiasms of

such men have often been of the greatest value to the world.

The disproof of this slur thrown upon the honour of Lord Selkirk, that he took advantage of the hospitality of the Nor'-Westers to obtain private information to be used in injuring their company, is seen in the fact that there is no evidence that for the following seven years the subject of gaining a hold of any portion of the fur traders' country for the purposes of colonization occupied his mind. Even if the subject were before his mind in those years, it seems very unlikely that he planned any scheme which would not allow the Nor'-Westers freedom of the vast territory which was sufficient for all their purposes.

As we have seen, philanthropic problems as to agriculture, the condition of the poor, the safety of the country, and the spread of civilization occupied his mind during these seven years. Lord Selkirk's work on emigration, consisting of well-nigh three hundred pages, discusses the state of the Highlands and the benefit of emigration to the colonies, but gives no hint that at that time he saw in the fur traders' land a field for emigration, or that envious thoughts had any place in his mind. He was in no way interested in the Hudson's Bay Company, and had no hostility to the Nor'-Westers.

By the year 1810 a plan had matured in the mind of the Earl of Selkirk to help the poor in his native

land and to carry out a project magnificent in its proportions and sufficient, if successfully executed, to relieve the widespread distress. This we may call the founding of a great colony in the interior of Rupert's Land—in other words the dream of a New World empire.

It is not necessary to suppose that any interest in the fur trade, for or against either of the companies, had anything to do with this great project. It was simply a comprehensive philanthropic scheme on the part of Lord Selkirk to relieve distress in his native land. In it was involved the ambition to succeed in so vast an enterprise.

As to the state of England in the first decade of the nineteenth century there can be no two opinions. A great English historian has said: "During the fifteen years which preceded Waterloo, the number of the population rose from ten to thirteen millions, and this rapid increase kept down the rate of wages, which would naturally have advanced in a corresponding degree with the increase in the national wealth. Even manufactures, though destined in the long run to benefit the labouring classes, seemed at first rather to depress them. . . . While labour was thus thrown out of its older grooves, and the rate of wages kept down at an artificially low figure by the rapid increase of population, the rise in the price of wheat, which brought wealth to the landowner and the farmer, brought famine and death to the poor, for England was cut

off by the Napoleonic war from the vast cornfields of the continent of America. Scarcity was followed by a terrible pauperization of the labouring classes. The amount of the poor rate rose fifty per cent.; and with the increase of poverty followed its inevitable result, the increase of crime."

It was in 1809 that the state of despair reached its worst, and the kind-hearted and ingenious-minded earl was impelled to action. He began to consider how, even though he should involve himself and his estate in heavy financial obligations, he might assist his Highland fellow-countrymen, whose traditions and associations he admired. Judged by the hard canons of finance we can see that he was projecting a very unlikely and doubtful enterprise; but to the earl with his deep sympathy and somewhat too vivid imagination it seemed feasible. Whatever the leading motive which dictated his course, it was certainly neither a partizan nor a sordid one.

With the remarkable caution that was united with his spirit of enterprise, he sought to know the legal basis on which the Hudson's Bay Company founded its title. In view of the importance which afterwards became attached to the legal question involved, it may be well to give the opinion of five distinguished English lawyers to whom the question was submitted.

"We are of opinion that the grant of the soil contained in the Charter (H. B. Co.'s Charter, of 1670) is good, and that it will include all the

country, the waters of which run into Hudson Bay, as ascertained by geographical observations.

"We are of opinion that an individual, holding from the Hudson's Bay Company a lease, or grant in fee simple of any part of their territory, will be entitled to all the ordinary rights of landed property in England, and will be entitled to prevent other persons from occupying any part of the lands, from cutting down timber, and fishing in the adjoining waters (being such as a private right of fishing may subsist in), and may (if he can peaceably or otherwise by due course of law) dispossess them of any buildings which they have recently erected within the limits of their property.

"We are of opinion that the grant of the civil and criminal jurisdiction is valid, but it is not granted to the company, but to the government and council at their respective establishments; but we cannot recommend it to be exercised so as to affect the lives or limbs of criminals. It is to be exercised by the governor and council as judges, who are to proceed according to the law of England.

"The company may appoint a sheriff to execute judgments, and to do his duty as in England.

"We are of opinion that the sheriff, in case of resistance to his authority, may collect the population to his assistance, and may put arms into the hands of his servants for defence against attack, and to assist in enforcing the judgments of the court;

but such powers cannot be exercised with too much circumspection.

"We are of opinion that all persons will be subject to the jurisdiction of the court who reside, or are found within the territories over which it extends.

"We do not think the Canada Jurisdiction Act (43. Geo. III.) gives jurisdiction within the territories of the Hudson's Bay Company, the same being within the jurisdiction of their own governors and councils.

"We are of opinion that the governor (in Hudson Bay) might, under the authority of the company, appoint constables and other officers for the preservation of the peace, and that the officers so appointed would have the same duties and privileges as the same officers in England, so far as these duties and privileges may be applicable to their situation in the territories of the company.

(Signed) "SAMUEL ROMILLY
"G. S. HOLROYD
"W. M. CRUISE
"J. SCARLETT
"JOHN BELL."

The report of these prominent lawyers gave Lord Selkirk his warrant for proceeding with his scheme. This was nothing else than obtaining, by purchase of its stock, a controlling interest in the Hudson's Bay Company. In the year 1810 he and his friends succeeded in purchasing a large

quantity of the stock of the Hudson's Bay Company, and by May, 1811, they owned £35,000 out of a total of £105,000.

The general court of the proprietors was called together for a meeting on May 30th, and the decision arrived at was of momentous interest not only to Lord Selkirk, but to the North-West Company, to the Hudson's Bay Company, and to British interests in the whole fur country of Rupert's Land, the Indian territories, and even in Canada. About £45,000 worth of stock was represented at the meeting. Nearly £30,000 of this amount was in the hands of Lord Selkirk and his friends. Such well-known Hudson's Bay Company names as Wedderburn, Mainwaring, Berens, and Pelly are chronicled in the minutes as on Lord Selkirk's side, while of the opponents Thwaytes and Whitehead owned £13,000, while three Nor'-Westers, who had purchased their stock within forty-eight hours of the time of the meeting, opposed the majority. These were Alexander Mackenzie, John Inglis, and Edward Ellice, and they together held £2,500 of stock.

The proposition Lord Selkirk made to the company was a great and important one. It was for the purchase of a tract of land in Rupert's Land lying east and west of the Red River of the North, and it involved the obligation on the part of the earl to settle, within a limited time, a large colony on the lands acquired, and the assumption

of the expense of transport, of outlay for the settlers, of government, of protection, and of quieting the Indian title to the lands.

The die was now cast. A territory consisting of some one hundred and ten thousand square miles, a region larger than Manitoba, was possessed by one man. He was a determined enthusiast who would imperil his estates and all his means for the furtherance of his project. He would beat down opposition, whether from the British government, the jealousy of the fur-trading section of the Hudson's Bay Company, or the bitter animosity of the North-West Company which considered the scheme one deliberately aimed at its influence, if not at its very existence.

CHAPTER IV

THE COLONY BEGUN

AN anxious season was now passed through by the colonizer. The planning and execution of a scheme of emigration as comparatively simple as carrying his eight hundred settlers to the shore of Prince Edward Island had been serious and difficult, how much more so was the crossing of the flow of Arctic ice from Hudson Strait, the landing on the inhospitable shore of Hudson Bay, and the penetration of the interior by a wild and dangerous route of seven hundred miles to the banks of the Red River. In all probability the founder had no conception himself of the gigantic obstacles which were to be met and overcome.

The project once entered on could not be abandoned; and the colonizer issued the advertisement and prospectus of the colony, and called for emigrants to join the enterprise. The advantages presented were clearly set forth, and the principles on which the colony was to be organized were satisfactory. His Lordship undertook to provide transport, to give the means of livelihood for a time, and to bestow parcels of land from his broad acres on Red River. The declaration that the greatest freedom of religious opinion was to be allowed, was,

for the beginning of the nineteenth century, a rather unique and unexpected proviso. Here was a contrast both to the conditions of settlement in Puritan New England, and to the early settlement of Lord Baltimore in Maryland where belief in the doctrine of the Trinity was a *sine quâ non*.

As it was not a part of Lord Selkirk's plan to accompany the expedition himself, it was necessary for him to obtain the assistance of a competent director or leader for the band of colonists. Some years before this time, the earl had been in correspondence with a young United Empire Loyalist named Miles Macdonell, who with his family, well-known in Canadian affairs, had left New York state and come to Glengarry, in Upper Canada. Young Macdonell had been an officer of the King's Royal Regiment in the war of the American Revolution, and held the rank of captain in the Canadian militia. To the colonizer's mind he possessed the necessary experience and firmness for the difficult task of leading a mixed band of emigrants during their trying journey. By the end of June, Captain Miles Macdonell had reached Britain and had been placed in charge of the enterprise.

Three ships, the *Prince of Wales*, the *Eddystone* and an old craft the *Edward and Anne* with worn rigging and an incompetent crew, had proceeded to Yarmouth, on the east coast of England. The two first-named were to carry the regular

cargo of the company to Hudson Bay; the third, unsuitable though it was, was to be the receptacle of the precious human freight going forth to found a new community. By the middle of July the little fleet had reached the Pentland Firth and was compelled to put into Stromness, in the Orkneys. Here the *Prince of Wales* took on board a number of Orkneymen who were to go out as servants of the company. Proceeding on their way the fleet made rendezvous at Stornoway, the chief town of Lewis, one of the Hebrides. Here had arrived a number of colonists or employés, some from Sligo, others from Glasgow, and others from the Highlands.

Many influences were now brought to bear against the colonizing expedition. It had the strenuous opposition of Sir Alexander Mackenzie, and pressure was successfully brought to bear upon some of those who had actually accepted Lord Selkirk's offer, in order to induce them to desert the expedition. A so-called "Captain" Mackenzie, denominated a "mean fellow," came alongside the *Edward and Anne*, which had some seventy-six men aboard—Glasgow men, Irish, and a few from Orkney—and claimed some of them as "deserters from His Majesty's service." The demand was, however, resisted. It is no wonder that in his letter to Lord Selkirk, Captain Macdonell writes: "All the men that we shall have are now embarked, but it has been a herculean task."

A prominent member of the expedition, Mr. Moncrieff Blair, though posing as a gentleman, deserted on July 25th, the day before the sailing of the vessels. A number of the deserters at Stornoway had left their effects on board, and these were disposed of by sale among the passengers. Among the officers was a Mr. Edwards, who acted as the medical man of the expedition. He had his hands completely full during the voyage, and returned to England with the ships.

Another notable person on board was a Roman Catholic priest, known as Father Bourke. Captain Macdonell was himself a Roman Catholic, but he seems from the first to have had no confidence in the priest, who, he stated, had come away without the leave of his bishop, who was at the time in Dublin. Father Bourke, though carried safely to the shores of Hudson Bay, never reached the interior, but returned to Britain in the following year.

After the usual incidents, and an "uncommon share of boisterous, stormy, and cold weather" on the ocean, the ships entered Hudson Bay. Experiencing in the bay a course of fine mild weather and moderate fair winds, on September 24th the fleet reached the harbour of York Factory, after a voyage of sixty-one days out from Stornoway. The *Eddystone*, which was intended to go to Churchill, not having been able to reach that place, sailed with the other vessels to York Factory.

YORK FACTORY, 1853

From a coloured engraving in the Public Archives of Canada

The late arrival of the expedition on the shores of Hudson Bay made it impossible to ascend the Nelson River and reach the interior during the season of 1811. Accordingly Captain Macdonell made preparations for wintering on the coast. York Factory would not probably have afforded sufficient accommodation for the colonists. Captain Macdonell states in a letter to Lord Selkirk that "the Factory is very ill constructed and not at all adapted for a cold country." In consequence of these considerations, Captain Macdonell at once undertook, during the fair weather of the season yet remaining, to build winter quarters on the north side of the river, at a distance of some miles from the Factory. No doubt matters of discipline entered into the plans of the leader of the colonists. In a short time very comfortable dwellings were erected, built of round logs a foot thick, the front side high with a shade roof sloping to the rear. The group of huts was known as the "Nelson encampment."

During the early winter the chief work which the captain laid on his two score men was providing themselves with fuel, of which there was plenty, and obtaining food from the Factory, for which sledges drawn over the snow were utilized by the detachments sent on this service. The most serious difficulty, however, arose at a meeting in which a dozen or more of the men became completely insubordinate, and refused to yield obedience either to Captain Macdonell or to M. W. H. Cook, the

governor of the Factory. Every effort was made to maintain discipline, but the men steadily held to their own way, lived apart from Macdonell, and drew their own provisions from the fort to their huts. These troubles tended to make the winter somewhat long and disagreeable.

Captain Macdonell, being a Canadian, knew well the danger of the dread scurvy attacking his inexperienced colonists. The men at the fort prophesied evil things in this respect for the "encampment." The captain took early steps to prevent the disease, and his letters to Governor Cook always contain demands for "essence of malt," "crystallized salts of lemon," and other anti-scorbutics. Though some of his men were attacked by scurvy, yet the sovereign remedy so often employed in the lumber camps of America, the juice of the white spruce, was used with almost magical effect. As the winter went on, plenty of venison was obtained, and the health of his party was in the spring much better than could have been anticipated.

After the New Year had come, all thoughts were directed to preparations for the journey of seven hundred miles or thereabouts to the interior. A number of boats were required for the transportation of the colonists and their effects. Captain Macdonell insisted on his boats being made after a different style from the boats commonly used at that time by the company. His model was the flat boat, which he had seen used on the Mohawk River in the

state of New York. The workmanship displayed in the making of these boats was very disappointing to Captain Macdonell, and he constantly complained of the indolence of the workmen. In consequence of this inefficiency the cost of the boats to Lord Selkirk was very great, and drew forth the objections of the leader of the colony.

Captain Macdonell had the active assistance of Mr. Cook, the officer in charge of York Factory, and of Mr. Auld, the commander of Churchill, the latter having come down to York to make arrangements for the inland journey of the colonists.

By June 1st, 1812, the ice had moved from the river, and the expedition started soon after on its journey to Red River. The new settlers found the route a hard and trying one with its rapids and portages. The boats, too, were heavy, and the colonists inexperienced in managing them. It was well on towards autumn when the company, numbering about seventy, reached the Red River. No special preparation had been made for the colonists, and the winter would soon be upon them. Some of the parties were given shelter in the fort and buildings of the company, others in the huts of the freed men, who were married to the Indian women and settled in the neighbourhood of the Forks, while others still found refuge in the tents of the Indian encampment in the vicinity.

The arrival of this party, small, discontented, wearied and well-nigh despairing, marks an era in

the history of the Red River, and of the present province of Manitoba. Though it was no very distinguished party, though it had no story of sentiment such as the Pilgrim Fathers had when they arrived at Plymouth Rock, though it was free of the glory of Penn as he came to lay down the principle of peace to the dusky savages, and though it lacked the political grandeur of the companies of the United Empire Loyalists who came to Upper Canada, yet it was the beginning of settlement upon the prairies, and is, therefore, of genuine interest and importance.

Lord Selkirk's indomitable perseverance had been rewarded by proving that a company of British settlers could weather a severe winter, and ascend the rapids and falls of the rivers running from the interior to Hudson Bay. His hopes to be the founder of a large community were not to be realized in his day; yet the last quarter of the nineteenth century has shown, in the settlement of Manitoba, the prescience and wisdom of Lord Selkirk.

CHAPTER V

RED RIVER OCCUPIED

THE outlook was dark for the band of colonists on the banks of the Red River. Milton and Cheadle, fifty years afterwards in starting on their journey westward across the plains from Red River complained that their chief difficulty was want of food. No field of grain had ever been sown on the fertile banks of the Red River when the colonists arrived. Game and fish were the only natural sources of the food supply. The shelter was insufficient, and the winter, with its low temperatures, was coming upon the unready settlers. Miles Macdonell, the governor as he was called, had tried to provide something for his dependents. Certain supplies of potatoes, barley, oats and garden seeds, were bought from the North-West Company, and these had been imported from Canada at a large expense. A few farm animals had also been brought to Red River to begin the operations of the infant settlement.

As the winter progressed supplies began to fail, and Governor Macdonell sought other means of support. The banks of the Red River, in what is now Manitoba, are much more wooded than the territory on the south side of the American bound-

ary line, in what is now Dakota. Lying lower, as it does, Manitoba has a large expanse of meadowland, and not the high plains which are found in Dakota. The herds of buffalo are fond of the elevated plateaux, and accordingly did not approach within sixty or seventy miles of the infant settlement. Governor Macdonell led his settlers up the banks of the Red River to a point where he selected a site for an encampment at Pembina, as the Nor'-Western fort was called. The herds of buffalo here were so tame that they came to rub themselves against the stockades of the fort. Though unaccustomed to the chase the new settlers obtained sufficient food for sustenance, and were thus able to pass their first winter.

The forks of the Red and Assiniboine Rivers, where now stands the city of Winnipeg, was the centre about which the new settlers gathered. Though now considered the chief centre of the West it was not so before the beginning of the nineteenth century. Important forts near where the towns of Portage la Prairie and Brandon now stand had, at the end of the eighteenth century, been the centres of trade. Fort Gibraltar, the first fort erected at the Forks, with the exception of a temporary French post in 1738, was begun only in 1804 by a *bourgeois* of the North-West Company. An encampment of the Hudson's Bay Company seems to have been established shortly before the arrival of the colonists, but now a number of buildings were

erected a mile north of Fort Gibraltar at a point ever since known as Colony Gardens.

While these trying experiences were overtaking the forlorn and inexperienced company of settlers, Lord Selkirk was seeking additional colonists to swell the numbers of his Red River establishment. The opposition of the Nor'-Wester agents in Britain was very damaging to him. Any reports of the sufferings of the first band of emigrants which may have reached the motherland were sure to be given currency.

Small though the number on the second voyage may have been, yet even these were seriously delayed at Stornoway, their place of embarkation, by the collector of customs, who, it will be remembered, was a relative of Sir Alexander Mackenzie. Objection was raised that the number being carried by the Hudson's Bay Company ships was in contravention to the Dundas Act. Through Lord Selkirk's interference, however, the ships were permitted to sail.

As if to fill their cup of trouble ship-fever broke out upon the voyage, so that a number of the passegners and crew died at sea, and others on the shore of Hudson Bay. A small number—not more than fifteen or twenty colonists—were ready to undertake the toilsome route from York Factory to Red River, and they were fortunate in being able to make the journey from Stornoway to Red River in one season, viz., that of 1813.

At Red River the little band, with marvellous pluck, made the most of its hard lot. Inured to the life of the country by their winter experience at Pembina the settlers returned to the settlement. The summer supply of food was even more difficult to obtain than that of the winter. The fish in the Red River were few in 1813; and edible roots and berries were scarcer than usual. The chief dependence of the settlers was on the starchy taproot of a plant growing on the plains, said by some to have been of the parsnip family, but probably the root of the prairie turnip of the pea family. The succulent leaves of a plant of the goosefoot family were boiled as pottage, and assisted in saving the settlers from starvation.

Though unprovided with agricultural implements, so great was the zeal of the new comers that with the help of the hoe they sowed a small quantity of wheat, which they had obtained from the fort at the foot of Winnipeg River on Lake Winnipeg. They were surprised to see their small sowing return them, in the finest wheat, nearly one hundred fold. The great yield gave them hope of the goodly land to which they had come, though their small patches of grain were preserved with great difficulty from blackbirds and pigeons, which, in myriads, sought to take toll of the strangers who had come to rob them of their solitudes.

To the difficulties of Governor Macdonell were now added the additional party, small though it

was, to be provided for and introduced to the hardships of an unknown and most trying life. The supply of food for the second winter was no more abundant than for the first, and the number of colonists was now approaching one hundred. The experience of the first winter had shown that a removal to Pembina was the only way of gaining an adequate means of supply. Accordingly the whole band wended their way southward to their winter quarters.

On their first arrival the Nor'-Westers had shown them no great opposition, thinking probably that the settlers would retire from the country when they found their hardships insupportable. The arrival of the second band, small though it was, began to show the Nor'-Westers that the colonizer was determined, and was not to be thwarted. No doubt this feeling of antagonism was increased by the action of Governor Macdonell, who issued a proclamation and built a fort, during his second winter in the neighbourhood of Pembina, to which he gave the name Fort Daer, from one of the family titles of Lord Selkirk.

Accordingly the colonists in their second winter sojourn at Pembina experienced a complete change in the attitude of the French half-breeds, who resided about them. In the former year, in their inexperience, the French natives had helped them greatly, but now things were changed. The half-breeds were evidently instructed by their masters, the Nor'-West

traders, to lend no assistance to the needy strangers. The snow was deep, and the colonists found it difficult to pursue the buffalo, and were often in great straits for food. Plots were sprung upon them, which made them afraid to go far from their place of abode, and provisions purchased by them were obtained at a very high price. When spring came the discouraged settlers returned in a destitute condition to their holdings near the Forks. A writer of the country describes them as "having had to barter away their clothing for food, many of them frost-bitten, half-naked, and so discouraged, that they resolved never to return to Pembina again under any circumstances."

Notwithstanding the serious obstacles which met the hundred colonists on Red River, the noble founder continued his efforts to add new members to his colony. No doubt the remoteness of his colony, and the impossibility of obtaining frequent information from it, hid from Lord Selkirk the serious condition of things on the Red River.

In 1813 he succeeded in despatching the largest number of settlers he had yet sent, and these reached Churchill by the *Prince of Wales* which started on her voyage from the Orkneys. Mr. Archibald Macdonald, who was in charge of this party while on its way to the interior, has left us a clear and interesting pamphlet as to their journey. The party was ninety-three strong. At Churchill, according to reports, they suffered much, as a severe fever had

raged among them on the sea voyage, and they were in a very unfit state to endure the severity of winter in so high a latitude.

About the middle of the following April Macdonald led a portion of his party—those strongest and most fit for the journey—by way of York Factory and up the Nelson River to the rendezvous on Red River. Arriving at their destination before the end of June, they were able to plant a considerable quantity of potatoes.

The possession of houses—though of a very humble kind—and the subdivision of the land produced a happier state of mind among the colonists. The second part of Macdonald's party arrived later in the season, Governor Macdonell having gone north to meet them.

On account of causes afterwards to be explained, some one hundred and fifty of the colonists, prejudiced by their difficulties and also led by strong inducements offered them by the Nor'-Westers, left Red River and by a long canoe journey down the fur traders' route reached the shores of Georgian Bay in Upper Canada and were given lands and assistance in the western part of that province. About one quarter of the colonists decided to remain in Red River Settlement, but these were threatened by the half-breeds and fled northwards to Jack River, since known as Norway House, near the north end of Lake Winnipeg.

In these unfortunate circumstances Governor

Macdonell was served with a summons to answer certain charges preferred against him before the courts of Lower Canada, and went east compelled to leave his hapless colonists without leadership or guidance.

Hunger, cold, enmity, persecution, threats, and actual personal violence, added to the homesickness and state of doubt incident to a new settler's life, made the condition of the Selkirk settlers at the end of 1814 in their refuge at Jack River a most pitiable one. But Lord Selkirk was a determined and brave man, and with true Scottish pluck he made arrangements for sending out another party, the best and strongest yet, to make good the loss by desertion, and to strengthen and defend the remnant now in a place of refuge. Governor Macdonell having been removed by legal process, his place had to be filled, and the colonizer obtained a military officer of high standing in the British army, who had been a notable traveller and author. This was Robert Semple, thereafter known as Governor Semple.

With a party of one hundred Highlanders, mostly from the parish of Kildonan, near Helmsdale, in Sutherlandshire, Scotland, the new governor hastened on his way, and made the whole journey from Britain to Red River in the one season of 1815, reaching his destination in October of that year.

On arriving at the settlement Governor Semple found the faithful remnant, which had fled to Jack

River, again upon their lands, led by Colin Robertson, a Hudson's Bay Company officer who had been sent to their assistance and who had been successful in inducing them to return to their deserted homesteads.

Such was the occupation of the Red River district by its first settlers. Nearly three hundred had been sent out by His Lordship. One half of these had gone to Upper Canada, and formed successful settlements in the township of Gwillimbury, south of Lake Simcoe, and in the district south of London in Upper Canada.

Other disasters followed the settlement, as we shall see in another chapter, but the foundation was laid and a control assumed which no doubt preserved the country for the British Crown. The Selkirk settlers were a barrier to all the machinations of the worst elements of the United States frontier who sought to foment disturbances between the two countries. Moreover, the Selkirk settlement became a nucleus around which gathered the retired traders of the Hudson's Bay Company with their wives and children, many of these having Indian blood. Thus was formed one of the most unique communities that the ethnologist can investigate.

Education and religion did not leave the infant settlement long neglected. A Scottish elder, empowered by the Church of Scotland to marry and baptize, accompanied the party brought out by

Governor Semple. The Roman Catholic Church sent out two devoted priests a few years later, and shortly after these came a clergyman from England to represent the Church Missionary Society.

From being a number of scattered and discouraged settlers the community grew to have an individuality, very marked in speech, customs, manners, and ideals. No doubt from its remoteness and want of energy it had peculiarities which might not draw forth unbounded admiration, but on the whole it was a staid, moral, loyal community. As we shall see, two years after the arrival of his last party, Lord Selkirk visited the settlement in the time of its greatest distress.

The chief service rendered to the empire by the Red River Settlement was that it became the predecessor of the Manitoba of to-day—of Manitoba with its sturdiness, energy, and enterprise, qualities which are making it an influential member of the sisterhood of provinces in the Canadian dominion.

CHAPTER VI

ANGRY PASSIONS

THE opposition shown by Sir Alexander Mackenzie and his Nor'-Wester friends in Britain to Lord Selkirk's scheme, first in opposing it in the Court of Adventurers of Hudson Bay and again in endeavouring to lead aside colonists who had accepted Lord Selkirk's terms, was but a presage of the attitude of the Canadian traders to the new settlers. True, on the arrival of the colonists, a position of hostility was not definitely taken by the Nor'-Westers, probably because the scheme was so chimerical to them that they believed it would fail by its own defects. However, the feeling of enmity early showed itself.

The half-breeds, *bois-brûlés*, or Métis, as they are in different accounts called, were chiefly allied to the Canadian traders, and they were inspired with the thought that this settlement meant an invasion of their territory and was an infringement of the Indian title, in which through their mothers they had an interest.

The Indians were much interested and even diverted by the newcomers. The thought of a people not living by the chase, but hoping to gain a livelihood by cultivating the soil seemed to them unique,

and lacked the romance of their wild and venturesome life. Observing the futile efforts of the colonists to turn up the earth with no implement more effective than the ordinary hoe and thus to attempt to grow wheat and oats, the Indians were quick to take up the words by which the French-Canadian half-breeds designated the colonists, *jardiniers* or gardeners, and *mangeurs de lard*—pork eaters—the one nickname signifying something like rustic or clodhopper to us, the other greenhorn or bungler.

It is worthy of note that even on the part of the Hudson's Bay Company's traders in the country there was some feeling of jealousy towards the colonists. Lord Selkirk had but lately bought stock in the company and was regarded as an interloper, and the "old hands" in the country were averse to the new plans proposed.

As already mentioned, the arrival of a second and then other contingents, sent out through the energy of the founder, aroused on all hands a feeling of alarm, and though the acres of Rupert's Land were wide, yet it must be confessed that new settlers were very far from being acceptable, much less popular, to the aborigines and mixed races among whom they came.

The new colonists being so ill-provided with the necessaries of life, and the bareness of the country making it impossible to give them subsistence, rendered the situation most difficult, and indeed

alarming. The founder's money was available for purchasing supplies, but there was no store of supplies for purchase. The long and dreary winter on the Great Lake so mournfully described in the sombre poem "Hiawatha," became more serious still on the borders of Lakes Winnipeg and Manitoba.

The instinct of self-preservation is one of the most imperious known to us. And so it came that during the second winter spent at Pembina by Miles Macdonell and his hungry followers, when buffaloes were scarce, the snow deep, and the attitude of the half-breeds so distinctly hostile, the governor bethought himself of some device by which he might secure a more certain means of support for his discouraged colonists. On reading over his instructions, based on the legal opinion given on a former page of the right of Lord Selkirk to exercise important powers in the country, Governor Macdonell determined to take an effective step towards utilizing the resources of the country. So in the very heart of the bitter and discouraging winter, the governor issued a proclamation, dated January 8th, 1814, in which the preamble runs: "Whereas the Right Honourable Thomas, Earl of Selkirk, is anxious to provide for the families at present forming settlements, etc., . . . all traders and others within the territory of the Hudson's Bay Company are forbidden to take provisions from the territory without permission in the form of a governor's license."

Now this proclamation played a great part in the events of the subsequent three years, not only in Red River Settlement but also throughout Rupert's Land.

No doubt under the legal opinion in his hands the founder and his deputy were justified in taking the step they did. At the same time it has been generally considered an imprudent and unfortunate act. The Nor'-Westers were the direct successors by blood, by colonial connection and sympathy, of the old French *voyageurs* who, three-quarters of a century before, had first explored Lake Winnipeg, the Red and Assiniboine Rivers, and the Saskatchewan up to the shadow of the Rocky Mountains. The native people were born in the land which their Indian ancestors claimed. The North-West Company had been in the district concerned a generation before the Hudson's Bay Company. Taking all these things into account, the proclamation was deemed a high-handed act which really dispossessed the people, and struck a blow at the high-spirited North-West Company, which in local resources was much the strongest force in the country. Moreover, the law of embargo is ever unpopular and distasteful, even when the legal authority to issue it may be undoubted.

It is quite true that the proclamation made provision for no monetary loss on the part of any one whose goods might be seized for the use of the colony. The document declared: "The provisions

procured and raised as above shall be taken for the use of the colony; and that no loss may accrue to the parties concerned, they will be paid for by British bills at the customary rates."

A chorus of dissents and angry threats greeted the ill-starred proclamation. The half-breeds, most of whom were trappers and accustomed to the free life of the plains, were especially thrown into a ferment. That what they considered a handful of foreigners should arrogantly curtail their natural rights was a thing not to be borne. Their loud protestations reached the ears of the governor, and their threats not only to disregard the proclamation but even to meet it with armed resistance roused the unfortunate governor to further action. The calm judgment of later times looks at the small force at the disposal of Governor Macdonell, and though not giving him credit for much wisdom or caution, admires his pluck and decision.

His next step was to direct his subordinate, Sheriff John Spencer, to proceed to Brandon House, a Hudson's Bay Company's fort one hundred miles or more west of the Red River, and situated on the bank of the Assiniboine, and to seize provisions which had been collected at Souris River, the North-West dépôt near the company's fort. Spencer seems to have had a more vivid sense of the danger than his superior officer, and would not go unless the governor would give him detailed instructions as to how he should proceed, and would guarantee

him against any subsequent damages. Governor Macdonell was something of a martinet and did not hesitate a moment in authorizing extreme steps to be taken.

Spencer executed his mission promptly and efficiently. No armed resistance was offered by the North-West Company's fort, and he seized six hundred bags of pemmican (dried buffalo meat), each weighing eighty-five pounds. The prize was placed under the care of the master of Brandon House, near by.

West and east alike were now aflame. The Nor'-Westers did not take immediate action. Knowing that their annual gathering would take place in early summer at Fort William, they held back until proper plans could be laid for vindicating themselves, and making their reprisals with due certainty. Simon McGillivray, one of the great Montreal chiefs of the North-West Company, had declared his dictum two years before this time: "Lord Selkirk must be driven to abandon his project, for his success would strike at the very existence of our trade."

The council at Fort William represented the full energy of the North-West Company, and their leaders were astute, determined, and ingenious men. They sent two of their most energetic traders, Duncan Cameron and Alexander Macdonell—the one representing a conciliatory if somewhat deceptive policy, the other being the apostle of force and

violence if necessary. Their choice showed the shrewd insight of the North-West Company's officers.

Duncan Cameron immediately began, on his return to Fort Gibraltar, his plan of oily persuasion. Being a Highlander and speaking Gaelic, which gave him instant entrance to the hearts of the colonists, he paid special attention to the leaders of the people by inviting them to the fort and entertaining them with true Highland hospitality. He further assumed an authority and state that impressed the simple-minded people with the glamour which the idea of chieftainship has for the Highland mind. He had been a member of a border corps of volunteers in Canada in 1812, and now had himself styled "Captain Commanding, etc." The accuracy of this title has been questioned. He certainly was dressed in a flaring red uniform which somewhat supported his claim. During the winter following the meeting of the partners at Fort William, Cameron organized his plan. He succeeded in gaining the allegiance of three-quarters of the Selkirk colonists, and awaited the opening of spring to carry out his full scheme.

The absence of Governor Macdonell at Pembina gave the Nor'-Westers an opportunity of advancing their interests at the Forks. Finding that a minority of the colonists were loyal to Lord Selkirk and their engagements, threats of violence were resorted to, and demand was made upon Archibald Macdonald, who had charge of the company's stores as vice-

governor, to hand over the field-pieces belonging to the colony. On this being resisted, the settlers who were prepared to follow Cameron broke open the storehouses and removed nine guns to Fort Gibraltar.

Governor Macdonell soon after returned, and having been served with a notice to surrender to the authorities represented by the Nor'-Westers, refused to acknowledge it. In June, a fortnight after the arrival of Alexander Macdonell, who represented the policy of violence of the North-West traders, a body of armed men proceeded from Fort Gibraltar and fired upon a number of the employés of the colony. In order to avoid further irritation and prevent possible bloodshed, Governor Miles Macdonell agreed to recognize the warrant issued for his arrest and proceeded under arrest to Montreal, but was never brought to trial.

Cameron was now ready to carry out his promise to the settlers who were disloyal to the colony; and in June with the deserters departed on his long journey to Upper Canada. In order to coerce the remainder, a notice, signed by Cuthbert Grant, the young leader of the half-breeds, and three others, was served upon the colonists: "All settlers to retire immediately from the Red River, and no trace of a settlement to remain." Naturally unwilling to give up their holdings and to return to the inhospitable shores of Lake Winnipeg, the settlers did not acquiesce.

At this time a fiery Highlander, seemingly able to cope with either Cameron or Macdonell, was in charge of the Hudson's Bay Company's affairs at the Forks. This was John McLeod. He gathered the colonists together into the group of buildings called the Colony Houses, and made his blacksmith shop, a small erection of logs, into a temporary fort. He took a small three or four pounder which was lying in the fort and brought it to the smithy. Bringing along a supply of powder, and cutting up a number of chains into short pieces the plucky Highlander awaited the assault.

It was on the very day of the serving of the order to the colonists to depart that a great demonstration of hostility was made by Alexander Macdonell and Cuthbert Grant, followed by some seventy or eighty armed men. In the fashion of the country they drew themselves up on their Indian ponies in battle array. The colonists and their leader stood their ground, and opened fire upon the attacking party with their chain shot, and scattered them.

McLeod in his journal states that, "All the colonists' houses were, however, destroyed by fire. Houseless, wounded, and in extreme distress, they took to the boats, and saving what they could, started for Norway House (Jack River), declaring they would never return."

After the departure of the colonists the assailants for several days kept up attacks on McLeod and

his Hudson's Bay Company servants, but at length retired, leaving the store of £800 to £1000 worth of valuable goods in the hands of their rightful owners. McLeod and three men repaired his buildings, and took steps to save the crops left behind by the refugee settlers.

He also in the last words of his diary makes an important announcement. "That done I took upon me, without order or suggestion from any quarter, to build a house for the governor and his staff of the Hudson's Bay Company at Red River. There was no such officer at that time, nor had there ever been, but I was aware that such an appointment was contemplated.

"I selected for this purpose what I considered a suitable site at a point or sharp bend in the Red River about two miles below the Assiniboine, on a slight rise on the south side of the point—since known as Point Douglas, the family name of the Earl of Selkirk. Possibly I so christened it—I forget."

Diplomacy and force combined seemed to have triumphed as embodied in the persons of Cameron and Macdonell. The order, "No trace of a settlement to remain," seems to have been a prophecy now fulfilled. Dark indeed looked the future for the two score colonists left crouching on the rocky shore at Jack River.

CHAPTER VII

BLOODSHED

IN the attack made on the colonists' quarters by the *bois-brûlés* a worthy gentleman, John Warren, of the Hudson's Bay Company service, had been killed. Blood had been shed, and it was the general expectation that other victims would follow. The total removal of the colonists, by deportation or expulsion, for a time gave an ominous peace. But the news of expected trouble had found its way down the fur-traders' route, and Colin Robertson, formerly a Nor'-Wester officer, came to the rescue under engagement to watch over Lord Selkirk's interests, and brought with him twenty Canadians. Finding the settlers had gone to Lake Winnipeg he followed them, and succeeded in leading them back to their deserted homesteads.

About ninety new settlers from Scotland, mostly from Helmsdale in Sutherlandshire, came in a single season, as we have seen, and Governor Semple's control gave hope of better things. Several of the demolished buildings were rebuilt, the governor's house was improved, others were erected beside it, and Fort Douglas began to assume a more military appearance.

The Hudson's Bay Company and colony under

the leadership of Governor Semple, a military man, and Colin Robertson, an experienced officer, became more aggressive. Fort Gibraltar, in its turn was captured by Robertson, and the field-pieces and other booty taken by the Nor'-Westers were restored to their rightful owners. Duncan Cameron was likewise seized as a reprisal for the arrest of Miles Macdonell, but he was given his liberty again.

The greatest anxiety now prevailed on both sides. For a few months Governor Semple had, with the colonists, made the usual winter visit to Fort Daer to hunt buffaloes, which this year were very abundant. Shortly after the New Year (1816) Governor Semple returned to the Forks, and he and Robertson now determined to act with decision on account of the threatenings of the *bois-brûlés* as to their purposes in the spring. Fort Gibraltar was captured, and Cameron, the commandant, was arrested, and taken by Colin Robertson to York Factory. On account of the ship from the bay not departing as usual, Cameron did not reach England for seventeen months.

Governor Semple now determined to dismantle Fort Gibraltar and take the material down to strengthen Fort Douglas. Before Colin Robertson's departure with Cameron in charge the destruction of Fort Gibraltar had been discussed with the governor, and Robertson had disapproved of it. However, on the departure of Cameron the fort was

dismantled, its stockades made into a raft, the remaining material piled upon it, and the whole floated down the Red River to Fort Douglas. Following out the same policy the officer commanding Fort Daer seized the North-West Company's fort at Pembina.

The new policy of "thorough" adopted by Governor Semple was, as events proved, a dangerous one. The Indians and "free-traders," the latter being French-Canadians with Indian wives, not attached to either company, were both inflammable elements. Fearing trouble the free-traders betook themselves to the plains. The Indians hearing the threats coming from the west, strange to say, offered the colonists their assistance. Governor Semple seems to have been living in a fool's paradise, not suspecting the danger by which he was surrounded. His late arrival in the country probably explains his want of prudent preparation. The cloud rising in the west grew darker and darker. From the east, too, came a rumour that a Nor'-Wester force was coming from Fort William to attack the settlement.

Cuthbert Grant wrote from the west to one of the Canadian officers that as soon as spring came the *bois-brûlés*, the "new nation," as he now called them, would drive out the settlers, and would remain at Red River for the summer to ensure that the settlers did not return. His words were loud and boastful. Efforts were made to induce the

Indians to join the western levies, but the redman was too astute to commit himself. *Nitchie*, as the Indian is called in the west, always wagers on the winning horse.

Coming down from Qu'Appelle and gathering his forces at Brandon and Portage la Prairie, Cuthbert Grant, with great spirit and bravery, swept down to overwhelm the English company and the helpless colonists. Mounted on fleet Indian ponies the party moved with great rapidity. Some four miles west of the Forks, the Nor'-Wester and half-breed contingent left the banks of the Assiniboine and crossed the prairie, probably to avoid Fort Douglas and to join forces with the eastern contingent.

It was on June 19th, 1816—a sad and bloody day commemorated by a stone monument three miles north of the city of Winnipeg, at the side of the king's highway—that Cuthbert Grant's party was seen from the watch tower of Fort Douglas, and the governor with a party of twenty sallied out to meet them, largely unprotected and no doubt entirely underestimating the danger which lay before them. Full of bravery, that all now see to have been the most fatal rashness, Governor Semple went on, sending back for a cannon which was in the fort.

The half-breeds on their horses approached Governor Semple's party in the form of a half moon at a point near the Red River called Seven

Oaks, and made a dashing and threatening display as they swept forward.

The colonists had betaken themselves to Fort Douglas, and in the accents of their mournful Gaelic tongue made sad complaint. A daring fellow named Boucher came from the ranks of the attacking party and approached the governor. Gesticulating wildly, he called out in broken English, "What do you want? What do you want?" Governor Semple answered, "What do *you* want?" To this Boucher replied, "We want our fort." The governor said, "Well, go to your fort." At this juncture the governor unwisely placed his hand on Boucher's gun. Immediately a shot was fired, probably by accident, and at once the firing became general. It has generally been believed that the first shot, intentional or unintentional, was fired from the *bois-brûlés* line. In a few minutes the work was done. Semple, his staff, as well as others of the party to the number of twenty-two, fell—killed and wounded.

Governor Semple had his thigh bone broken by a shot, but was not killed. A kind French-Canadian undertook to care for the governor, but in the fury of the fight an Indian—the greatest rascal of the company—shot the wounded officer in the breast and killed him instantly. There were few Indians in the attacking party, but the half-breeds were many of them disguised in Indian dress and painted for the war dance.

Rarely does so complete a slaughter take place, and the plains of Rupert's Land had seen nothing approaching it in horror since the coming of the white man. Cuthbert Grant was full of excitement. Before the skirmish was fairly over he declared that unless the fort were given up immediately, it would be taken by force and every man, woman and child would be put to death. This policy, seemingly as determined as that of "Old Noll," was effective, and led to a bloodless surrender of Fort Douglas. On the evening of the third day after the fight, after an inventory had been taken of the effects, the band of colonists mournfully filed out of their fort, again to betake themselves to Lake Winnipeg, their haven of rest in trouble.

The other party which had come from Fort William was to meet that of Cuthbert Grant before the attack was made. It was perhaps this fact that led the western leader to conduct his men across the prairie in the rear of Fort Douglas. The eastern contingent was under the command of A. N. McLeod and two Swiss mercenaries engaged by the Nor'-Westers in Montreal. The length of the journey from Fort William—more than four hundred miles—is sufficient cause for their failure to reach the rendezvous promptly. The party was coming up Red River when they met the seven or eight boats loaded with colonists whom Cuthbert Grant had allowed to depart under the command of the sheriff of the Red River Settlement.

A very clear account of the latter part of this sanguinary episode in the fur traders' history is given by Sergeant Huerter, one of the Swiss mercenaries who had accompanied McLeod. After McLeod had challenged the retreating settlers he ordered them ashore, examined all the papers in their effects, took possession of all letters, account books, and documents of every kind, broke open Governor Semple's trunks, and indeed treated the poor colonists with needless severity.

Seven days after the fight McLeod's party arrived at Fort Douglas, and was received with volleys of artillery and small arms. As senior officer on his arrival McLeod took command of the fort, and occupied the quarters lately used by Governor Semple. Huerter visited the field of Seven Oaks shortly after his arrival and saw a miserable sight. A number of human bodies lay scattered about the plains, and were nearly reduced to skeletons, very little flesh adhering to the bones. It was said that many of the bodies had been partly devoured by dogs and wolves.

The savage Indian blood did not fail to assert itself in the rejoicings and revelry that took place after the victory. The *bois-brûlés* were painted, and danced naked after the Indian fashion. Riotous scenes took place day after day. Violent threats were freely made against the Hudson's Bay Company, Lord Selkirk—the founder—and even against the poor colonists themselves.

The poet of the French half-breeds—a rhymster named Pierre Falcon—celebrated the victory in his irregular numbers. The first stanza ran :—

> "Do you wish to listen to celebrate a song of truth ?
> The nineteenth of June the *bois-brûlés* have arrived
> As brave warriors,
> They have arrived at the Frog Plain."

The last stanza has been versified :—

> "Who has sung this song of triumph ?
> The good Pierre Falcon has composed it
> That his praise of these *bois-brûlés*
> Might be ever more recorded."

Alexander Ross, the historian of the early Red River days, has given a curious sequel to this deed of blood on the part of the *bois-brûlés* under their Nor'-Wester leaders. Of the sixty-five persons who composed Cuthbert Grant's party, he points out that no less than twenty-six met a violent or sudden death, and he gives the names and fate of the twenty-six in his work on Red River Settlement. Equally curious is the answer given by Joseph Tassé in his "Canadians of the West." "Ross would see in the miserable death of these men almost a chastisement of Providence, as if it was not unfortunately too often the lot reserved for these intrepid men, who pass their life in the chase, on the plains, or in the game forests of the North-West, who are constantly exposed to the greatest dangers and to accidents of every kind."

CHAPTER VIII

AN EXPEDITION OF RESCUE

LORD SELKIRK knew well that trouble and likely bloodshed were to be expected on Red River. His anxiety for the success of the colony and the happiness of his settlers led to his determination to visit Canada, and, if possible, the colony. Accordingly, late in the year 1815, taking with him his family, consisting of the countess, his son and two daughters, Lord Selkirk hastened to Montreal. On arriving in New York he learned of the first dispersion of the colonists, their flight to Norway House, and the further threatenings of the excited *bois-brûlés.* On the founder's arrival in Montreal in October, he found it too late to proceed on his journey up the lakes to the interior.

In Montreal he spent the winter in the face of his powerful enemies. The Nor'-Westers watched him with wolf-like ferocity. Full of the highest moral courage he brought the affairs of his beleaguered colony before the government of Lower Canada, but little did he know how bitter was the opposition engendered among the fur traders to himself and his scheme.

In February, 1815, Lord Selkirk represented his fears to Lord Bathurst, the British secretary of

state, and suggested the despatch of an armed force to preserve the peace. After the overt acts of violence committed during the summer of 1815 the case demanded immediate attention, and Lord Selkirk brought the urgency of the matter under the notice of Sir Gordon Drummond, governor of Lower Canada, supplying His Excellency with an account of the cruel expulsion of the people from their homes in the Red River.

It was plain that no influence could be brought upon the authorities to interfere in the matter. The greater part of the power in Lower Canada was in the hands of the Nor'-Westers and their friends, for the fur traders were the leading merchants of Montreal, and many of them were in the legislature and in positions of trust. It is true, as we have seen, that during the winter of 1815-16 there was little turmoil, but it was only the calm before the storm, and Lord Selkirk strongly suspected this.

Accordingly he began to plan a private expedition. This he would lead in person to the Red River, and restore his colony to peace. He had confidence in the strength of Fort Douglas to resist a considerable attack, and now that his new governor, Robert Semple, was there—an experienced and brave officer—he believed the case hopeful.

His Lordship was not, however, a man to do things by halves. He had been sworn in as a justice of the peace in Upper Canada and for the Indian

territories, and had received the promise of a sergeant and six men of the regular army to accompany and protect him. Not able to obtain the privilege of leading an armed party, that being a prerogative of the Crown, he originated a project of engaging a number of discharged soldiers and making them settlers, placing them upon his land, that, in time of need, he might call upon them for assistance.

The close of the Napoleonic wars had led to a reduction in the size of the British army. Among the brave Swiss regiments likely to be reduced were two which were sent to Canada to assist in the war against the United States. This war being now over the regiment often called, after the colonel of the more celebrated corps, the De Meurons, was disbanded. With some one hundred of these mercenaries Lord Selkirk concluded a bargain to go to the North-West as military settlers under his pay, and to render assistance as required.

Great outcry was made against Lord Selkirk for employing these soldiers ; the De Meurons are declared to have been desperadoes, worthless and despicable. It is well to remember that four of the same regiment were engaged by Mr. A. N. McLeod on his expedition to crush out the colony.

Early in June, 1816, a number of officers and about one hundred men went westward to York (Toronto), their strength being increased by as many sturdy canoemen. It was His Lordship's in-

tention to proceed westward to where the city of Duluth stands to-day, then known as Fond du Lac. Leaving the expedition before its arrival at Sault Ste. Marie, he had a conference with the garrison stationed on Drummond's Isle. Here the colonizer had a long and interesting interview with Kawtawahetay, an Ojibway chief, in which the Indian asserted that inducements had been held out to himself and his warriors to unite in driving the colonists entirely from Red River.

The party had little more than found Sault Ste. Marie when it was met with news of the most serious kind: nothing else than the murder, as it was called, of Governor Semple, the destruction of his band of attendants, and the banishment of the unfortunate settlers to their place of refuge on Jack River. This was a crushing blow.

The plan of voyage was at first to go by way of Fond du Lac and through what is now Minnesota to Red River, and thus reach Fort Douglas, which was to be their capital and residence. Now it was absolutely necessary to go to Fort William, and meet the enemies of his people, as they sought to return to Canada. Feeling as a magistrate that the *bois-brûlés* and their leaders had done grievous wrong, he determined to bring the murderers to justice.

The resolve to go to Fort William involved facing many dangers and risking a serious conflict. But Lord Selkirk had the courage of his ancestors. He directed his expedition up the Kaministiquia

River from Lake Superior and Thunder Bay, and encamped directly opposite Fort William, the citadel of his enemies. The first step was to demand the release of the Red River prisoners who were being carried away by the Nor'-Westers, and were at this point on the way to Canada. On this demand being made the leaders sent the prisoners to His Lordship's camp, and denied that they had ever arrested them.

Making use of his magistrate's commission, Lord Selkirk obtained depositions from men actually engaged in the fur trade to the effect that the partners and officers of the North-West Company were guilty of inciting opposition to the colony, and of approving the attacks made on his people. He then issued warrants against McGillivray, McKenzie, Simon Fraser, and others but allowed them to remain in Fort William. At first much liberty was given these prisoners, but on suspicion of a conspiracy arising among them, they were confined in one building.

A fuller examination having been made the guilt of the prisoners seemed clear, and three canoe loads of them were despatched eastward under guards. One of the canoes was unfortunately capsized in a storm, and one of the best known Nor'-Westers (McKenzie) was drowned.

Lord Selkirk was severely criticized in this matter. The best that can be said is that it seemed to be the fashion for each side to take advantage of

its temporary strength or opportunity to gain an advantage. Miles Macdonell was first arrested and taken to Canada by the Nor'-Westers ; then, in reprisal, Duncan Cameron was carried off to Hudson Bay ; and now the McGillivrays and Fraser—high officers—were taken captive and deported down the lake. It seems to an impartial observer like the old Scottish border feuds reduced to a science, and conducted according to the forms of law, or like the practical carrying out of Robin Hood's maxim—

> "The good old way, the simple plan
> That they should take who have the power,
> And they should keep who can."

Certainly Lord Selkirk had much provocation, and we can hardly wonder at his using his force of the De Meurons to vindicate himself and his interests.

Lord Selkirk remained at Fort William, and for the time was free of all danger from his foes. It was August, and he began to think of preparing for winter, as he could hardly expect to follow the long canoe route to Red River, and be certain of reaching his destination before winter set in, as he must take the risk of armed opposition into account. He moved his camp up the Kaministiquia River, some nine miles above Fort William, and the wintering place on the cliff overlooking the river is still known as Point De Meuron.

The usual uneventful winter on the shore of Lake Superior —where the outside world becomes

a blank—was passed by His Lordship and his followers.

In March, 1817, the De Meurons started on their journey to Red River. After leaving Lake of the Woods, they followed a route across country, in order that they might take the Nor'-Westers in Fort Douglas by surprise. This expedition was successful, and the trained soldiers without much opposition took the stronghold of the *bois-brûlés* who knew little of the real art of war.

In May Lord Selkirk started on his inland journey, and in the last week of June reached Red River and looked upon the land that had been his dream for fifteen years, ever since he had read Sir Alexander Mackenzie's book of voyages. His arrival gave instant hope for the settlement of the troubles in the North-West. The government of Canada had issued a proclamation to the effect that all property taken during the troubles should be returned to the original owners. To a certain extent the restitution took place. The settlers were brought back again from their place of refuge on Lake Winnipeg to their deserted homesteads.

On the return of the colonists they were gathered together in a sort of general council to meet their noble friend and protector. The gathering was at the spot where the burying-ground and church of St. John's are now to be seen in the northern part of the city of Winnipeg. Church and burying-ground and school were then provided for, and on the people

requesting a minister of religion to be sent them His Lordship acknowledged the obligation saying, "Selkirk never forfeited his word."

The twenty-four lots which had been occupied by the woe-begone and discouraged colonists were promised to them free of all dues. At the request of the colonists the founder gave a name to their settlement, calling their parish Kildonan from their old home in the valley of the Helmsdale in Sutherlandshire, Scotland. His Lordship ordered also a complete survey of the land to be made, and steps to be taken to lay out roads, to build bridges, and to erect mills. Report goes that old Peter Fidler, the surveyor of the company, laid out the boundaries which remain in many instances to this day.

Lord Selkirk, whom the Indians called "Silver Chief," as we have said, met them with their chiefs, and gained their complete confidence. His affability and fairness impressed the trustful redmen. The object of the treaty made with the different bands was to extinguish the Indian title. The meeting with the Indians was a memorable one. Peguis, the Saulteaux chief, made a sensible speech; the Assiniboine chief claimed His Lordship as a true friend; Robe Noire, the Ojibway, said, "We have reason to be happy to-day." From that day to this the Indian of the Red River has looked upon the white man as a brother.

Such was Lord Selkirk's noble work of pacification on the Red River. A writer of the time, speak-

ing of His Lordship, says, "Having thus restored order, infused confidence in the people, and given a certain aid to their activity, Lord Selkirk took his final leave of the colony."

Passing down the Mississippi River to St. Louis he journeyed eastward to Washington, came northward to Albany, and hastened to Upper Canada, without diverging to Montreal to visit his family, though he had not seen his wife and children for more than a year. The threatening cloud of disaster seemed dark in that direction, but he did not flinch, and pushed forward to meet it.

CHAPTER IX

WORRY AND DISASTER

THE year in which Lord Selkirk visited his colony was one of note. Sir John Coape Sherbrooke had been in constant communication with Lord Bathurst in England, but how to act and bring to an end the disgraceful state of things on British territory was the puzzle. All power in Lower Canada seemed centred in the hands of the North-West oligarchy. Lord Selkirk had appealed in vain for assistance. To get a fair-minded commissioner in Canada seemed impossible to Governor Sherbrooke. At length, W. B. Coltman, a merchant of Quebec and a lieutenant-colonel of militia, a man accustomed to government procedure, was appointed. It must be added that he was unwilling to accept the duty. With him was sent Major Fletcher, who possessed legal qualifications.

Through various delays it came about that Commissioner Coltman and his bodyguard of forty men of the 37th Foot did not reach the shores of Lake Winnipeg till July 2nd, 1817. This was only a few days after Lord Selkirk's arrival. Lord Selkirk had been represented during the past winter in Montreal as a buccaneer and a tyrant, and Colonel Coltman expected some trouble with

His Lordship. In this the commissioner found himself quite mistaken. He was so impressed with Lord Selkirk's reasonableness and good faith that he recommended that the legal charges made against him should not be proceeded with.

Colonel Coltman, after investigating affairs at Red River, made preparations for a speedy return to Canada. His sense of justice and fairness impressed men of all shades of opinion at Red River. At the mouth of the Winnipeg River he writes that he had stopped over for a time to investigate the conspiracy to destroy the Selkirk settlement in which he feared the North-West Company had been implicated. By November of 1817 Colonel Coltman had returned to Quebec, and the governor had the satisfaction of reporting to the British colonial secretary "that the general result of Colonel Coltman's exertions had been so far successful that he had restored a degree of tranquillity in the Indian territories which promises to continue during the winter."

Colonel Coltman's report of about one hundred folio pages is an admirable one. His summary of the causes and events of the great struggle between the companies is well arranged and clearly stated. Lord Selkirk, while treated impartially, appears well in the report, and the noble character of the founder shines forth undimmed.

But the cessation of hostilities, brought about by the proclamation of the king and by Coltman's visit

to the interior, did not bring a state of peace. The conflict was transferred to the courts of Upper and Lower Canada, these having been given power some time before by the imperial parliament to deal with cases in the Indian territories.

A notable trial was that of Charles Reinhart, an employé of the North-West Company, who had been a sergeant in the disbanded De Meuron regiment. Having gone to the North-West he was, during the troubles, given the charge of a Hudson's Bay Company official named Owen Keveny, the accusation against the latter being that he had maltreated a Nor'-West employé. It was charged against Reinhart that in bringing Keveny down from Lake Winnipeg to Rat Portage he had at the Falls of Winnipeg River brutally killed his prisoner.

While Lord Selkirk was at Fort William, Reinhart, having arrived at that point, made a voluntary confession before His Lordship as a magistrate. When the case came before the court in Quebec the argument of local jurisdiction was raised as to whether the Falls of Winnipeg River were in Upper Canada, Lower Canada or the Indian territories. Reinhart was found guilty, but the sentence was not carried out, probably on account of the uncertainty of the jurisdiction of the court. This case became an important precedent in recent times.

Lord Selkirk's return, and bravery in facing the charges made against him, did not in the least

moderate the opposition of his enemies of the North-West Company, but served rather to stir up their hatred. Sandwich, the extreme western point of Upper Canada, was a legal centre of some importance, and here four charges were laid against Lord Selkirk, which were very irritating to His Lordship. These were: (1) Having stolen eighty-three muskets at Fort William; (2) having riotously entered Fort William, August 13th; (3) assault and false imprisonment of Deputy-Sheriff Smith; (4) resistance to legal warrant. The first of these charges failed, though a heavy bail was kept hanging over Lord Selkirk, which was very annoying to him, but served the purposes of his enemies.

In Montreal, in 1818, an action was brought against Colin Robertson and four others for destroying Fort Gibraltar in 1815, but the charge against them was ignominiously dismissed. This was shortly followed by an action against Lord Selkirk and others for having conspired to ruin the trade of the North-West Company. This case was tried before the celebrated Chief-Justice Powell. When the grand jury refused to bring in an answer on the case, the irate chief-justice summarily adjourned the court. In the next session of the legislature of Upper Canada, of which the chief-justice was a member, legislation was passed enabling the courts to deal with the charges against Lord Selkirk. This high-handed proceeding was but in keeping with many indefensible legislative acts of Up-

per Canada in the first quarter of the nineteenth century.

This legal conspiracy succeeded. In a court held at York (Toronto), Lord Selkirk was mulcted in damages of £500 in favour of Deputy-Sheriff Smith, and £1,500 for illegal arrest and false imprisonment of McKenzie, a North-West partner at Fort William.

Lord Selkirk, with the pertinacity which characterized him, then brought charges against the murderers of Governor Semple, against a number of partners of the North-West Company as accomplices, and two other charges against some of the settlers, lured away by Duncan Cameron, for stealing His Lordship's property. In all these four cases a verdict of "Not guilty" was rendered. The evidence of these trials was published separately by the rivals, with partizan notes in each case. Upwards of three hundred pages of evidence were printed relating to the Seven Oaks affair.

Enough of this disheartening controversy! It would be idle to say that Lord Selkirk was faultless; but as we dispassionately read the accounts of the trials, and consider that while Lord Selkirk was friendless in Canada, the North-West Company had enormous influence, we cannot resist the conclusion that advantage was taken of His Lordship, and that justice was not done. It is true that in the majority of cases the conclusion was reached that it was impossible to place the blame with precision on

either side ; but we cannot be surprised that Lord Selkirk, harassed and discouraged by the difficulties of the colony and his treatment in the courts of Upper and Lower Canada, should write as he did in October, 1818, to the Duke of Richmond, the new governor-general of Canada : —

"To contend alone and unsupported, not only against a powerful association of individuals, but also against all those whose official duty it should have been to arrest them in the prosecution of their crimes, was at the best an arduous task ; and, however confident one might be of the intrinsic strength of his cause, it was impossible to feel a very sanguine expectation that this alone would be sufficient to bear him up against the swollen tide of corruption which threatened to overwhelm him. He knew that in persevering under existing circumstances he must necessarily submit to a heavy sacrifice of personal comfort, incur an expense of ruinous amount, and possibly render himself the object of harassing and relentless persecution."

The ferocity of spirit exhibited by the Nor'-Westers in Lower Canada and their allies, the Family Compact of Upper Canada led by the redoubtable Dr. Strachan, can hardly be believed was not the evidence overwhelming. To a man of Lord Selkirk's high ideals, it meant simply the destruction of all his hopes and plunging him into the deepest discouragement.

CHAPTER X

THE SHADOWS FALL

VERY rarely has a benefactor made his return voyage across the Atlantic Ocean so utterly cast down as Lord Selkirk was in 1818. Full of hope and determination he had, in 1815, sent out his military governor, Semple, in whom he confided much. Though full of anxiety Selkirk had nevertheless come to Montreal full of determination and resource. But now the condition of his remote and helpless colonists, the opposition of the governing powers in Canada, his expensive and discouraging lawsuits, and the mental suffering that comes to a proud spirit when it is beaten and broken—all these combined to make his return to his native land a most melancholy one.

Soon after His Lordship's return his friend, Sir James Montgomery, brought the serious features of Lord Selkirk's treatment in Canada before the British House of Commons, moving for all the official papers in the case. The motion was carried and the Bluebook—known as that of 1819—contains a storehouse of material, where the patient student may find recorded the chief facts of this long and heart-breaking struggle.

The mental condition of Lord Selkirk soon began

to prey upon his body—never very strong at the best. He sought in his overstrained state the assistance of his friends, and his self-vindication seemed to be the only topic on which his active mind spent itself.

In the year following his return from Canada, and when all about him became fearful for his health, his friend, Lady Katherine Halkett, in order to give his mind occupation and comfort, appealed to his old college friend—now become the most influential man in many ways in Scotland—Sir Walter Scott, requesting his aid in placing fairly before the world the misrepresentations of Lord Selkirk's enemies. The chivalrous Sir Walter was suffering acutely at the time, and was unable to comply with Her Ladyship's wish. The writer was fortunate in obtaining from Lord Selkirk's family (1881) a copy of the letter which Sir Walter Scott wrote in reply, and it may be well to give as much of it as bears upon the subject:—

"My Dear Lady Katherine,—I was most exceedingly indisposed when Your Ladyship's very kind letter reached me. . . . The bad news your favour conveyed with respect to my dear and esteemed friends, Lord and Lady Selkirk, did not greatly tend to raise my spirits, lowered as they were by complete exhaustion. . . . I am afraid I have already said enough to satisfy Your Ladyship how ill-qualified I am, especially at this moment, to undertake a thing of such consequence to Lord

Selkirk as a publication of his case. . . . It is most painful to me in these circumstances, my dear Lady Katherine, to feel that I should be attempting an impossibility in the wish to make myself master of the very unpleasant train of difficulties and embarrassments in which Lord Selkirk has been engaged. . . . Most devoutly do I hope that these unpleasant transactions will terminate as favourably as Lord Selkirk's ardent wish to do good, and the sound policy of his colonizing deserve ; for, as I never knew in my life a man of a more generous and disinterested disposition, or one whose talents and perseverance were better qualified to bring great and national schemes to conclusion, I have only to regret in common with his other friends the impediments that have been thrown in his way by the rapacious avarice of this great company.

"I have been three days in writing this scrawl. I cannot tell Your Ladyship how anxious I am about Lord and Lady Selkirk.

"I beg my best compliments to Mr. Halkett, and am always, with most sincere regard, Your Ladyship's most obedient and faithful servant,

"WALTER SCOTT.

"Edinburgh, 10th June, 1819."

To see a man thus prostrate whose years—forty-eight—had scarcely brought him to his prime is sad, but kind and loving hearts supplied their sympathy and care to the sinking earl. The countess and her

young family accompanied him to the continent, and in the south of France sought the rest and pleasant surroundings that they hoped would restore him. The months dragged on without any improvement, and on April 8th, 1820, at Pau, in the department of Basses Pyrenees, in the south of France, Lord Selkirk died surrounded by his family. His bones lie in the Protestant cemetery at Orthes, in the same department.

The *Gentleman's Magazine* of 1820 gives a sketch of his life, evidently penned by a loving hand:—

"Few men were possessed of higher powers of mind, or were more capable of applying them with more indefatigable perseverance. His treatise on 'Emigration' has long been considered a standard work, and as having exhausted one of the most difficult subjects in the science of political economy. His Lordship is also advantageously known to the public as the author of some other literary productions, all of them remarkable for the enlargement and liberality of their views, the luminous perspicacity of their statements, and that severe and patient spirit of induction which delights in the pursuit and is generally successful in the discovery of truth.

"To his friends the death of this beloved and eminent person is a loss which nothing can repair. His gentle and condescending manners wound themselves round the hearts of those admitted to his society, and conciliated an attachment which

every fresh interview served to confirm. With those connected with him by the ties of kindred and the sweet relations of domestic society, His Lordship lived on terms of the most affectionate endearment; indeed, seldom has there existed a family the members of which were more tenderly attached to each other than that of which His Lordship was the head, and few families have experienced a more severe succession of those trials by which the Almighty chastens the heart and disciplines the virtues of His creatures. His Lordship was eminently exemplary in the discharge of every social and private duty. He was a considerate and indulgent landlord, a kind and gracious master; to the poor a generous benefactor, and of every public improvement a judicious and liberal patron.

"The latter years of the life of this lamented nobleman were employed in the establishment of an extensive colony in the western parts of British America. In the prosecution of this favourite object he had encountered obstacles of the most unexpected and formidable character. With these, however, he was admirably qualified to contend; to the counsels of an enlightened philosophy and an immovable firmness of purpose, he added the most complete habits of business and a perfect knowledge of affairs. The obstructions he met with served only to stimulate him to increased exertion; and after an arduous struggle with a powerful confederacy, which had arrayed itself against him, and which

would, long ere now, have subdued any other adversary, he had the satisfaction to know that he had finally succeeded in founding an industrious and thriving community. It has now struck deep root in the soil, and is competent, from its own internal resources, to perpetuate itself and to extend the blessings of civilization to those remote and boundless regions."

We add nothing. These are fitting words with which tenderly to leave the foreign grave of the founder of the Red River colony.

Lady Selkirk survived the fated earl. Their son Dunbar James Douglas succeeded his father in 1820 and died in 1885, when the title became extinct. Lady Isabella Helen, eldest daughter, married the Hon. Charles Hope, who was at one time governor of the Isle of Wight. Their son, Captain John Hope, R.N., now occupies the Selkirk family seat of St. Mary's Isle, Kircudbrightshire, Scotland. Lady Catherine Jane, second daughter, married Loftus Tottenham Wigram. The family of Earl Thomas are now all dead.

SIR GEORGE SIMPSON

From an engraving in the John Ross Robertson collection

SIR GEORGE SIMPSON

CHAPTER I

DARK DAYS AND THE MAN FOR THE TIME

SOMETIMES the names of men intimately associated or diametrically opposed to one another are continually appearing together before us. It was so in the case of the two men, Sir Alexander Mackenzie and Lord Selkirk, whose careers we have been following. Of two whose lives afford a striking example of friendship it was said, "in their death they were not divided." It may be similarly remarked in regard to these two notable opponents. Mackenzie's book gave the impulse to Lord Selkirk's movement; Mackenzie's company gave the clue to Lord Selkirk for his scheme; Mackenzie was the chief opponent in the Hudson's Bay Company to the sale of territory to Lord Selkirk for his colony; under Mackenzie's silent but powerful opposition, the chief obstacles were thrown in the way of His Lordship's colonization project; and now within a month of each other the two antagonists were called away from earth's trials and rivalries, Sir Alexander dying on his way home from London, March 12th, 1820; and Lord Selkirk passing away twenty-seven days later, on April 8th, far from home, seeking health in a foreign land.

But leaving aside the personal questions at issue, and looking at the interests of the two rival companies, we readily see that their antagonism was a mistake for both; that instead of applying their energies in overcoming the forces of nature in their trade they had wasted them in bitterness and hostility to one another. This was recognized by both companies as soon as the heat of passion began to die down, after the action of the imperial government and the timely visit of Colonel Coltman to the scene of conflict. Two years had elapsed since the return of Lord Selkirk from America. As is usually the case some of those who had stood sullenly in the background during the painful conflict now raised their voices in favour of peace.

The chief agent in a movement towards reconciliation was Edward Ellice. His father and the two sons were known as the "bear and cubs" by the old Hudson's Bay Company people. One would say that, if this comparison were well chosen, Edward Ellice would hardly be the man for a peacemaker. His father, however, had large financial interests in the fur trade, and the son had gone from England to Canada in 1803. The young trader passed through the stirring days when the new North-West Company or X. Y. was, by its ruinous policy of using strong drink in trade and of sending aggressive traders everywhere, making the fur trade unprofitable. He had seen the union of the old and new North-West Companies in

which brothers had been divided, and chief friends thrown into hostile camps. He had seen that breach closed and those wounds completely healed.

Fifteen or sixteen years had passed since that time, and Ellice advocated, under the circumstances similar to those of the earlier date, that the two great companies which had been fighting a battle royal should lay down their arms and be friends. He urged strongly the plea of self-interest. Both companies were reduced to the verge of bankruptcy. He pointed out that there was great extravagance in the conduct of trade. Two rival traders, outbidding each other, gave more for the furs than they were worth, simply to gain the victory over each other. Often two traders were stationed where the catch of furs was limited, and both establishments at the close of the year showed a serious shortage. The necessity of watching rivals, of ascertaining their plans, and of counterworking opposing movements caused a great loss of time, and so a loss of money and of prestige.

The Indians were irritated by the varying standard of values in trade caused by unhealthy competion, and their relatives, the half-breeds, were in sympathy with them, while the half-breeds of the plains, mostly French and belonging to the North-West Company, were an excitable element at any time, ready to break the peace and create trouble in the country.

Thus jealousy, overtrading, loss of time, too great

an extension of agencies, and carelessness of management had, even before Lord Selkirk came upon the scene, led to a loss of money and to the decay of the companies. It was said that it was the low rate to which the stock of the Hudson's Bay Company had fallen that induced Lord Selkirk to buy into the company for the purpose of furthering his emigration scheme.

The massacre of a British officer and his staff to the number of upwards of twenty, cultivated and useful men, by a half-breed band on the plains of Rupert's Land, where for a century and a half the Hudson's Bay Company had ruled, and where for fifty years the shrewd Scottish sense of the Montreal traders had prevented more than an occasional death by violence, startled the imperial government into activity. Lord Bathurst, hearing of Edward Ellice's plan, sent for the peacemaker, heard his views, and adopted the method suggested. He promised to unite the companies by statute if they could but make a financial adjustment between themselves.

The propounder of the plan, encouraged by the promise given by the government, undertook amid numberless prophecies of failure to bring together the hostile elements. Mr. Ellice gives an account of his difficult work in the evidence taken before the Parliamentary Committee of the British House of Commons in 1857.

The agreement, reached after much discussion,

was entered into on March 26th, 1821. It provided that the two companies should share equally the profits of trade for twenty-one years, each company furnishing an equal amount of capital. The whole stock was divided into one hundred shares, forty of which were to be distributed among the wintering partners, as the traders actually engaged in Rupert's Land were called.

In order to preserve the rights of both parties the new Act provided for the appointment and specified the duties of new officials. The governor and directors of the new Hudson's Bay Company were given power to appoint district governors, who were to preside at meetings of chief factors, and three chief factors were necessary to constitute a council. Twenty-five chief factors and twenty-eight chief traders were provided for, to be taken alternately from the two companies. The forty shares to be divided among the wintering partners were divided into eighty-five parts, and to each chief trader was given a one-eighty-fifth share, while each chief factor owned two eighty-fifths. The remaining seven shares were divided among old and deserving members of both companies. The Act provided for a license to be given to the company to trade in the territories outside the original Hudson's Bay Company's territory as far west as the Rocky Mountains, but did not include the Pacific slope. The license granted was to be renewed every twenty-one years.

The Act which accomplished the union, which

was often called the coalition, was passed on July 2nd, 1821. Provision was made for trying minor offences by local magistrates, but criminal cases involving capital punishment and civil suits of over £200, were to be brought for trial before the courts of Upper Canada.

But the real work of reconciliation was not to be accomplished by passing equitable Acts of parliament, or by bestowing fair salaries upon the partners. It needed a man of the right stamp to unify and moderate the opposing members. What qualifications should such a man have? He needed to be young and independent, not having strong affiliations with either party, and yet a man of intellect, of position, and of attractive manner to hold the respect of shrewd, experienced factors and traders. He must be of British rather than Canadian antecedents in order that the older company might be satisfied, and yet preferably a man of Scottish origin to gain the confidence of the strong Celtic element which largely made up the North-West Company of Montreal. To have visited the fur country was a necessity, and yet not to have there lost his business habits as so many of the older traders who had lived long at the remoter posts had done. A man, he must be, of quick perception, affable manners, patient temper, good judgment, and of natural astuteness. Was such a catalogue of virtues and habits to be found in any one man? It seemed very unlikely.

In the year before the coalition a young man had been sent from the London office of the Hudson's Bay Company in Fenchurch Street by Andrew Colville, Lord Selkirk's brother-in-law, to watch over the fur-trading interests of the Hudson's Bay Company in far-distant Athabaska, where shrewdness and decision were needed, if anywhere. This was George Simpson. His birth might have been urged against him, but subtle minds might prove that it gave him an advantage in the trying and thankless position to which he was called. It has been shown that William the Conqueror, the Duke of Monmouth, and others who had the bar sinister across their escutcheons, developed enormous powers of pluck and determination. So it was with George Simpson, who was the uncle of Thomas Simpson, the Arctic explorer. His strong, clear intellect, high animal spirits, well-knit, broad-chested frame, compact height—five feet and seven inches—plausible tongue, and affable disposition—all these with, perhaps, the added consciousness that he must depend entirely on his own exertions, made him a man surprisingly fitted for the work of directing the great enterprise in the hands of the Hudson's Bay Company.

He had come to the fur country in 1820, and in that year arrived on Lake Athabaska with fifteen loaded canoes. Like Sir James Douglas on the other side of the Rocky Mountains, Simpson seemed to

grasp the situation at once, and his resource and courage were shown immediately. He reached out as far as Peace River. Whether he ever visited Great Slave Lake is not known. His account of his winter spent in Athabaska is interesting :—

"At some seasons both whites and Indians live in wasteful abundance on venison, buffalo meat, fish and game of all kinds, while, at other times, they are reduced to the last degree of hunger, often passing several days without food. In the year 1820 our provisions fell short at the establishment, and on two or three occasions I went for two or three whole days and nights without having a single morsel to swallow, but then, again, I was one of a party of eleven men and one woman which discussed at one sitting meal no less than three ducks and twenty-two geese." Thus was concentrated in one season an experience valuable to the future governor.

The young governor immediately braced himself to his great work. The union of Hudson's Bay Company traders with Nor'-Westers changed the centre of gravity of the trade, and Norway House on the north side of Lake Winnipeg took the place of Grand Portage or Fort William where the Nor'-Westers were wont to assemble. In later years Governor Simpson was accused of being arbitrary and dictatorial, but at the early meetings held at Norway House he won golden opinions for his affability and fairness. The work of every dis-

THE RED LAKE CHIEF AND FOLLOWERS VISITING THE GOVERNOR OF THE HUDSON'S BAY CO. AT FORT GARRY

From a contemporary drawing

trict was reported on; and the new governor at once, by his diplomacy and shrewdness, took his place among these wily old traders of the west, able to baffle Indian cunning and deceit, and showing himself a thorough leader of men.

As we shall see he was imperious on the route. He was as "furious as Jehu" in his driving, but it was men, not horses, he impelled to swift action. The story was prevalent a generation ago on Red River that on one of his voyages, in crossing the Lake of the Woods, the impetuous governor was urging forward his favourite French *voyageur* with such unreason that the stalwart boatman, it is said, seized his tormentor by the shoulder, and plunged him into the lake, to draw him out quickly, wet and dripping, suiting his action with an emphatic oath.

With great rapidity and yet with business tact Governor Simpson reduced to order the chaotic affairs of the two companies. Learning from the assembled chief factors at Norway House the nature of the trade at every point, a radical policy was pursued of cutting down establishments, withdrawing from unremunerative points, distributing the money influence to better advantage, conciliating the hostile and encouraging the discouraged. In every corner of the wide region of Rupert's Land as well as in the valleys and shores of British Columbia, was felt the power of this predominating personality, from the very moment of his laying his hand upon the helm.

Complaints no doubt were heard from time to time, some of the older officers left the company, many gave vent to bitter feelings. A good writer among the traders, Ferdinand Wentzler, wrote in 1824: "The North-West is now beginning to be ruled with a rod of iron." It was natural that there should be discontented ones, but this adverse opinion serves to show that Governor Simpson was a living, energizing fact in the wide-spread affairs of the company. We shall follow this man of iron will and shrewd diplomatic faculty through the mazes of business in which he distinguished himself for nearly forty years, while he upheld the dignity and usefulness of the high office to which he had been called.

CHAPTER II

THE MEN HE LED

IT is usual to make great movements in the world depend on the trusted leader who inspires courage, and points the way to other men. Thomas Carlyle's doctrine of heroes is a very simple way of accounting for human progress. Great leaders themselves, however, are the first to point out how much they depend for their success on the faith, honour, and ability of their subordinates, and to cast doubt on Carlyle's philosophy. Especially in the case of Governor Simpson was this so. He was young, unacquainted with the fur trade, and in a remarkable degree dependent on those leaders in the company who had tramped the winter snows and stood up for their own party in Rupert's Land, the Indian territories, and New Caledonia.

The band of twenty-five chief factors and twenty-eight chief traders, chosen half and half from each of the uniting companies, made up half a hundred men whose knowledge, experience, courage, and zeal could hardly be surpassed. With a sprinkling of Englishmen and a few Irish these select leaders of the fur trade were chiefly Scotsmen, who, with executive ability and power of adaptation, upheld

the reputation of their countrymen for sagacity and trustworthiness. It may be worth while to look at some of these leaders and their achievements as they aided the young governor in bringing order out of the chaos into which conflict had thrown the companies.

Chief among the chief factors was Colin Robertson, who had been a Nor'-Wester at first, but who had entered the service of the Hudson's Bay Company under Lord Selkirk's direction to forward the interests of the colony. Robertson, while somewhat irascible, was a useful and competent man. His appointment augured well for a friendly attitude towards the Red River colonists on the part of the new company, and was a pledge that the interests of the English company would not be swamped by the aggressive traders from Montreal.

Another chief factor of peculiarly picturesque and notable mien was John McLoughlin. His part was chiefly played west of the Rocky Mountains in the Oregon district. Edward Ellice, the peacemaker between the companies, said of McLoughlin, "Dr. McLoughlin was rather an ambitious and independent personage. He was a very able man, and, I believe, a very good man. . . . While he remained with the Hudson's Bay Company he was an excellent servant." McLoughlin was fond of show, and his distinguished manner is said to have impressed Governor Simpson. A trader's journal is worth quoting: "McLoughlin and his suite would

sometimes accompany the south-bound expeditions from Fort Vancouver, in regal state, for fifty or one hundred miles up the Willamette, when he would dismiss them with his blessing, and return to the fort. He did not often travel and seldom far; but on these occasions he indulged his men rather than himself in some little variety. . . . It pleased Mrs. McLoughlin thus to break the monotony of her fort life. Upon a gaily-caparisoned steed, with silver trappings and strings of bells on bridle reins and saddle skirt, sat the lady of Fort Vancouver, herself arrayed in brilliant colours, and wearing a smile which might cause to blush and hang its head the broadest, warmest, and most fragrant sunflower. By her side, also gorgeously attired, rode her lord, king of the Columbia, and every inch a king, attended by a train of trappers, under a chief trader, each upon his best behaviour."

Further north in New Caledonia proper, as the district to the west of the Rocky Mountains had been named by the enterprising Scotsmen from Montreal, Chief Factor John Stuart made a name for himself. Near the beginning of the nineteenth century, John Stuart, as lieutenant of Simon Fraser, made one of the most notable and difficult journeys of exploration recorded, in his descent of the Fraser River from its source in Stuart's Lake, so called from this trader, to a few miles from its entrance into the Pacific Ocean. John Stuart, though second in command of the expedition, was

versed in engineering and was a more cultivated man than his leader, Simon Fraser. He is generally believed to have been the brain of the enterprise. Stuart was a man of much information and literary tastes. Far up in the fastnesses of the Rocky Mountains he kept in touch with the important new books, and from his lofty standpoint discoursed upon the amenities of literature in correspondence with his fellow-traders of kindred tastes.

Foremost among the chief factors under the new organization were Donald McKenzie, a man of affairs, and Alexander Christie, who had a diplomatic and kindly spirit. Both of these men rose still higher in the service of the company, becoming governors of the colony of Assiniboia. Some dozen years after the union of the companies, it became evident that the Hudson's Bay Company should relieve Lord Selkirk's heirs of the responsibility of maintaining the colony. During eight years of this time Governor McKenzie ruled as well as the troublous times would permit. When a settlement was reached with Lord Selkirk's representatives, Alexander Christie, who had succeeded Governor McKenzie, became the official governor of Selkirk colony, under the general control of Governor Simpson.

Many schemes for the agricultural development of the Red River colony had been tried during the transition period after Lord Selkirk's death until 1835, but they had failed, and this chiefly through

mismanagement. The Hudson's Bay Company now found it necessary to supersede the patriarchal form of government, and to give a semblance of representative government.

The council of Assiniboia was a partly successful ruling body, though in its later years unpopular, largely because it was said to reflect the company's rather than the popular opinion. Governor Christie was the first governor of Assiniboia who had a regular council to assist him. The council included fifteen members, Governor Simpson was president but Governor Christie the local head of the body. This council included the leading clergy, retired fur traders, merchants, and settlers of the colony. Chief Factor Christie served his first period as governor for six years, and after an interval another period of two years.

Thus among the twenty-five chief factors and twenty-eight chief traders we might go on selecting men worthy of notice. Time would fail to tell all their notable exploits. James Bird retired to settle in the colony and became a member of influence in the council of Assiniboia. Edward Smith became a dominant figure in the far Mackenzie River district. Chief Factor George Keith, who passed most of his life in Athabaska, Mackenzie River, and Great Bear Lake, wrote a series of most interesting letters, embodying a number of Indian tales; his brother James was also a leading chief factor who lived in later years at Lachine.

Chief Factor James Leith will long be remembered. In his will less than twenty years after the coalition of the companies he left £12,000 to be expended for the benefit of the Indian missions of Rupert's Land. His relatives bitterly opposed this bequest, but the case was decided against them, and the interest of this amount, with £300 a year given by the Hudson's Bay Company, now goes as an annual income of £700 to the bishopric of Rupert's Land. So much for the leaders at the time of the union.

As years quickly passed new men rose to take the place of the retiring chief factors and to give Governor Simpson their assistance. To name a few of these is but fair.

In 1825 William Connolly became chief factor. He was notable in the district west of the Rocky Mountains, New Caledonia, being in charge of Fort St. James. Married to an Indian wife, his large family grew up to be well educated and notable. One of his daughters became Lady Douglas, the wife of Sir James Douglas of Victoria, British Columbia.

On William Connolly leaving the heights of the Rocky Mountains, he was succeeded in the charge of his post by Peter Warren Dease, who became chief factor in 1828. Dease was very celebrated in his notable expedition with Thomas Simpson, a relation of Governor Simpson. They were sent out by the Hudson's Bay Company to explore, in 1837,

the coast of the Arctic Sea, and performed the duties assigned to them with much success.

Duncan Finlayson became a chief factor in 1832, and seven years later began his five years of service as governor of Assiniboia. The reign of Governor Finlayson is treasured in the memory of the people of the Red River Settlement as that of an ideal governor. Ross says of him: "A man of business habits, liberal principles, and strictly just, he knew nothing of party and its objects, but at once took his position in the interests of all, and especially as the friend of the poor." This is a most desirable record for a public man to leave behind him.

But among all those called to his councils by Governor Simpson, the man possessed of the highest qualities as an administrator was James Douglas, afterwards Sir James, who eventually became a chief factor. Douglas was a man of imperial mind, and his fame stands high on the Pacific coast today. Born near the beginning of the century, a scion of the noble house of Douglas, James Douglas joined the North-West Company as a lad, and, going west, was soon taken by Dr. McLoughlin to the Pacific slope. At Fort St. James he learned the Indian languages with the same facility as he had mastered French, and soon among the wild tribes of the Upper Rockies showed his ability in managing men. He married Nellie Connolly, a native girl of sixteen, daughter of Trader Connolly.

He rose with marvellous rapidity in the service, and was made chief factor in 1840. It was said of him: "He was one of the most enterprising and inquisitive of men, famous for his intimate acquaintance with every service of the coast." He became governor of Vancouver Island in 1851, was knighted in 1863, and continued governor of the island as well as of the mainland of British Columbia.

It is impossible even to mention the names of all who were high in favour as trusted councillors of Governor Simpson during his many years of service. The appointments to the annual council, usually held at Norway House, were generally made at the governor's suggestion. This tended to make his position somewhat difficult, by spreading the impression that he was the fur-trading autocrat, an impression, indeed, which a close reading of the records will not fail to confirm.

Men are at times raised to positions of importance largely on account of what seem to be accidental circumstances. An instance of this is seen in the case of James Hargrave. He was for years the officer in charge of York Factory, on Hudson Bay, which was the *entrepôt* of Rupert's Land. Orders from traders and others for their supplies poured in to Hargrave, who had goods bought and forwarded inland by the annual ship as it arrived at York Factory from Britain.

A strong friend of Hargrave's at Red River Settlement was the Rev. William Cochrane, the

THE POSTMAN OF THE NORTH

From a drawing by Arthur Heming

stalwart missionary who really laid the foundations of the Church of England in Rupert's Land. The forces at work in making chief factors are shown by him in a letter to Hargrave. After years of service at York Factory, Hargrave thought, and so did his friends, that he was deserving of the honour of promotion from the position of *bourgeois* to that of chief trader, and after that chief factor. The chief tradership was long in coming. Before it came Cochrane wrote to him of his expectation that the governor would grant it. Disappointed in one year he writes in the next: "Are you likely to get another feather in your cap? I begin to think that your name will have to be changed into MacArgrave. A 'Mac' before your name would produce a greater effect than all the rest of your merits put together. Can't you demonstrate that you are one of the descendants of one of the great clans?" But the governor did not forget, for in 1833 Hargrave was made chief trader and eleven years afterwards chief factor.

John Siveright, George Barnston, and John Ballenden were all men who as letter writers, prominent traders, and able men rose to the highest places of distinction in the service.

One most notable man whose name cannot be passed by is that of the trader and explorer, Dr. John Rae, who became a chief factor in 1850. Dr. Rae's chief distinction was his daring and success in coasting up the west shore of Hudson Bay,

chiefly without carrying a supply train. He found traces of the remains of Sir John Franklin, and obtained half the reward offered by the British government for traces of the lost explorer. Dr. Rae was a man of scientific tastes and most active mind, and to the day of his death retained an enthusiastic interest in Rupert's Land.

William McTavish, who reached the height of ambition of every fur trader, was appointed chief factor in 1851, and became the last governor of Assiniboia under the Hudson's Bay Company régime. He was a man of force of character, though he fell on evil times in the troublous years of 1869 and 1870.

The region of Labrador knew well the distinguished services of Donald A. Smith, now Lord Strathcona, for more than twenty years under Governor Simpson's rule, though he was not made chief factor until the year after the death of the great governor.

Robert Campbell, a Perthshire Highlander, for more than thirty years a favourite of the governor, noted as the discoverer of the Upper Yukon, and John McIntyre, master of Fort William, a devoted follower of the governor, both rose, some years after Sir George's death, to high rank in the company.

These are some of the men —not by any means all who should be mentioned—who supported Governor Simpson and helped to make his administration strong. Many of their names have been

given to posts, or forts, or lakes, or capes in the wide extent of Rupert's Land. They were chiefly noted for their uprightness and trustworthiness. Among the Indians, when there was no military or police force, no law or civil authority, it was found that the probity and faithfulness of the fur trader was the chief power in promoting order and good-will among the native peoples. The Hudson's Bay Company's officers and men gained the reputation of being keen traders not to be trifled with, and yet fair men who would not take undue advantage in a bargain. Governor Simpson had, on the whole, a trustworthy band of men to lead, and this largely accounted for his success.

CHAPTER III

THE DOMAIN OF AN EMPEROR

GOVERNOR SIMPSON had a remarkable faculty of adapting himself to his surroundings, and soon caught the spirit of the fur traders. He was far from being a mere money-maker—a business automaton. He was fond of the social life which had been developed in the precincts of the Hudson's Bay Company's posts. New Year's Day, St. Andrew's Day, and probably other notable days were observed, and the Indians, only too prone to indulge their idle habits, were glad to fall in with such cheerful interruptions to the monotony of life.

On these holidays and especially for the week between Christmas and the New Year, there was at times too great a tendency to indulgence. But Governor Simpson was in thorough harmony with the fur traders' customs. No doubt he found it necessary to maintain an attitude of strict opposition to the use of strong drink in dealing with the Indians, but with the occasional relaxation of rules at set times he was in perfect sympathy.

This dual character in the governor also showed itself in business matters. He was a keen business man. Before his time, in the conflict of the com-

panies, business had languished and both companies suffered heavy loss. New establishments had been built out of pure rivalry, and many of them were far from paying for themselves. With remorseless exactness and thoroughness Governor Simpson dealt with these, closed them, reduced their expenditure, or reorganized their methods. But with all this there was in the governor an unusual love of pomp and show. This was a very valuable element in impressing the Indian imagination, and could have been justified on business grounds, but it was with the governor rather a piece of thorough enjoyment—a survival of his boyish nature, when, with the aid of decorated canoes and flags and music, he disported himself in the pageants of the traders.

In the seventh year of his governorship he made a notable voyage through his fur-trading domain from York Factory to Fort Vancouver on the Columbia River. It is fortunate for us that there was with the governor a gentleman, Archibald Macdonald, who had the "pen of a ready writer," and who has left us a most readable description of the journey in a small work entitled, "Peace River; a Canoe Voyage from the Hudson Bay to the Pacific."

The departure of the expedition on its transcontinental trip was a great event at York Factory. Two light canoes were very thoroughly fitted up for the journey—tents for camping, utensils for the

LES VOYAGEURS

From a painting by Mrs. Hopkins

camp-fire, arms to meet any danger, provisions in plenty, wine for the gentlemen and spirits for the *voyageurs*. Each canoe carried nine picked men, and from Governor Simpson's reputation as a swift traveller it was quite understood that their lot would not be an easy one.

On July 28th, 1828, fourteen chief officers—factors and traders—and an equal number of clerks were gathered together at the Factory to inaugurate the great voyage. The event had gathered the whole Indian community about the posts, and probably no greater spectacle had taken place at York Factory since Miles Macdonell and his Scottish settlers, nearly twenty years before, had started for their new home on the Red River. Hayes River resounded with the cheers of the assembled traders and their dependents, while a salute of seven guns made the fir trees of the northern station re-echo with the din. The *voyageurs* then gave in unison one of the famous boat-songs for which they are noted, and with pomp and circumstance began their journey.

The long progress of hundreds of miles from the Factory to the outlet of Lake Winnipeg was made with lightheartedness and marvellous speed. Near the foot of Lake Winnipeg is situated Norway House, which at the time was the virtual capital of the fur traders. The approach to this point was made an event of great importance. The fort, though simply a dépôt of the fur trade, had a

number of Indian settlements within reach, and all the denizens of the region were on tip-toe to see the pageant which they knew was approaching. Indian warriors and trappers were there in large numbers; the lordly redman was accompanied on all his journeys by his whole family, so that bevies of old and young women peered upon the scene from the background, while groups of Indian children with their accustomed shyness stood awe-struck at the spectacle. The "Kitche Okema" —the greatest mortal they had ever seen—was coming.

The party from York Factory had begun already to show marks of their voyage, and so they landed some miles away from the fort, performed their toilets and arranged their attire as best they could. Fully ready they resumed the journey, and with flashing paddles sped through the rocky gorge by which Norway House is reached, quickly turned the point, came in sight of the fort built on a slope rising from the lake, and saw floating from the tall flagstaff of Norway pine on the top of Signal Hill the Union Jack with the letters H. B. C.,—the flag which had a magical effect on every trader and Indian as he beheld it flying aloft.

The governor's gaudily painted canoe was easily discernible by its high prow, on which sat the French-Canadian guide, who for the time being, as pilot, had chief authority. The governor looked on with interest, while from his immediate neighbour-

hood in his canoe pealed forth the music of the bagpipes, as well suited for effect on the rocky ledges surrounding Norway House as for the fastnesses of the governor's native land. From the second canoe rang out the cheery bugle of the senior chief factor, who was really in command of the expedition.

As the canoes came near the shore the effect was heightened by the soft and lively notes of the French-Canadian *voyageurs*, who were always great favourites of the governor. The song they sang in French was one that never becomes wearisome—that of "*A La Claire Fontaine.*" The leader carolled the solo:—

"A la claire fontaine
M'en allant promener,
J'ai trouvé l'eau si belle
Que je m'y suis baigné."

And then all joined in chorus—

"Il y a longtemps que je t'aime
Jamais je ne t'oublierai."

The reception over, the governor at once proceeded to the duties of his office and examined the details of the work of the fort.

A large correspondence had met him at Norway House. To despatch this and examine the prospects of trade at the place was a work into which the governor entered with the greatest gusto. All officers and employés appeared before him; the buildings, books, trade, and outlook were all inspected

or considered, and this man of lordly tastes was found to be possessed of an iron will and keen business acumen. His rapidity in despatching business was so great that it was said he could do the work of three ordinary men.

The long journey of a thousand or more miles from Norway House to Fort Chipewyan, into the detail of which we cannot enter, was accomplished by rapid transit, interruptions only being made to examine minutely the affairs of Cumberland, Carlton, Edmonton, and a score of minor points along the route.

Fort Chipewyan had always maintained its preeminence as an important dépôt of the fur trade. The governor had spent his one year as a clerk within its precincts. He now returned to it with his new rank as a potentate having power to make or unmake men. Its picturesque position as well as historic memories appealed directly to him. Here he met the officer in charge, William McGillivray, whose name was a great one among the Nor'-Westers, the original chief of that name, after whom Fort William was called, having died three years before this voyage took place. McGillivray, at the invitation of the governor, taking his family with him, joined the party in crossing the Rocky Mountains.

The same waving of flags, firing of guns, shouting of Indians and employés, and the sound of singing and bagpipes which had attended the arri-

val and departure of the distinguished travellers at Norway House were repeated at Fort Chipewyan. A little more than a month had passed from the time of their leaving York Factory when the travellers entered Peace River in order to cross the Rocky Mountains. As Forts Vermilion, Dunvegan, and St. John were passed, the most important fact pressed on the members of the expedition was the lack of provisions. This was a year of unusual dearth in the whole region as far as Fort McLeod, which lay west of the summit of the mountains.

At the various stopping-places the governor, besides examining into the financial prospects and management of each fort, was called upon to settle disputes. This His Excellency did with the same distinguished success with which he accomplished all his other duties. Presiding with the air of a chief-justice, he gave caution and advice in the most impressive manner, and with due solemnity he lectured the Indians for their orgies and for the scenes of violence which often followed them.

In passing from Fort McLeod to Fort St. James the journey was made across the crest of the Rocky Mountains, the *voyageurs* carrying the baggage on their shoulders, while horses were provided for the gentlemen of the party. Fort St. James being the emporium of the fur trade for New Caledonia, was a place of note, and the entry to it was made as splendid as circumstances would permit. The journal says:—"Unfurling the British ensign it was

given to the guide, who marched first. After him came the band, consisting of buglers and bagpipers. Next came the governor, mounted, and behind him Dr. Hamlyn, the physician, and Macdonald, the scribe, also on horses. Twenty men, loaded like beasts of burden, formed the line; after them a loaded horse; and finally McGillivray with his wife and family brought up the rear."

Thus arranged, the imposing body was put in motion. Passing over a gentle elevation, they came into full view of the fort, when the bugle sounded, a gun was fired, and the bagpipes struck up the famous march of the clans, "Si coma leum codagh na sha" (If you will it, war). Trader James Douglas, who was in charge of the fort, replied with small ordnance and guns, after which he advanced and received the distinguished visitors in front of the fort.

Descending from the crest of the Rocky Mountains, by September 24th the party came to Fort Alexandria—named after Sir Alexander Mackenzie—four days down the Fraser River, and then reached Kamloops, the junction of the North and South Thompson Rivers. At every place of importance the governor took occasion to assemble the natives and employés and gave them good advice, "exhorting them to honesty, frugality, temperance," finishing his prelections with a gift of tobacco or some commodity appreciated by them.

After a rapid descent of the Fraser River the

party reached Fort Langley near its mouth, in two days less than three months from the time of their starting from York Factory. From this point Governor Simpson made his way to Fort Vancouver, on the Columbia River, then the chief post on the Pacific coast, and in the following year returned over the mountains, satisfied that he had gained much knowledge and that he had impressed himself on trader, *engagé*, and Indian chief alike.

CHAPTER IV

AS CIVIL RULER

IN less than twenty years Governor Simpson had gained complete leadership of the Hudson's Bay Company, and his word had become law. This arose not from a mere autocratic disposition on his part, but from the recognition of his wisdom and ability in London and in the vast western territory. The governor, while visiting his wide domain every year, made his headquarters in Lachine, near Montreal, and thus became acquainted with Canadian life. In this way Governor Simpson became the exponent of the best traditions and opinions of the old Nor'-Westers as well as the embodiment of the interests of the directors in London, whom he visited as often as possible. His influence in Canadian affairs became very considerable. Many of the retired traders lived in Montreal and along the St. Lawrence and Ottawa rivers, forming a sort of guild of their own, and the governor naturally became the leader of this wealthy and influential set. He even succeeded in reviving the Beaver Club for a short time.

Troublous days fell upon both Upper and Lower Canada in the third decade of the century. The French in Lower Canada were dissatisfied with the

oligarchy which governed them, for up to this time Britain had not trusted the French-Canadians to govern themselves. In Upper Canada the Family Compact, a combination of placemen, governed the province without regard for the interests or will of the masses of the people. These conditions led to the unfortunate rebellion of 1837–8. Papineau in Lower Canada and William Lyon Mackenzie in Upper Canada headed the revolt. No doubt the state of things in the two provinces justified great discontent, and the two sets of placemen were responsible for the evils which an oppressed people rose to overthrow. It is questionable, however, whether the evils could not have been remedied without the dreadful alternative of an appeal to arms. Of course the Hudson's Bay Company, its officers, and retired partners and men were a part of the system of oligarchy, and threw in their lot with the government as determined loyalists.

This was not surprising. The Hudson's Bay Company was a chartered company, and of old standing. All such organizations have their very life in the favour of the state, and are disposed to support the interests of capital as against the rights claimed by the people. It is probably a good feature of the British constitution that there are bodies which stand for law, order, and stability when popular tumult threatens to overturn and destroy established institutions. Nevertheless, popular government demands, and rightly, that equity

and fair play be meted out to all classes of the people.

The interests represented by Governor Simpson in Montreal were strongly united against the Papineau rebellion. That rebellion was soon suppressed by the force of the regular soldiery, aided by the lack of coherence in the rebel party and the natural differences arising among its chiefs. Furthermore, there was a settled conviction in the minds of the French people that the British government, which had been their friend after the conquest in 1759, would in the present crisis accord them justice. It was the wheel of government nearest them which they wished to destroy, not the force which supplied guidance to the larger mechanism.

The rebellion over, the usual British process of examining into the grievances which had caused the outbreak took place. Lord Durham came to Canada, and with his liberal instincts, recommended a course of legislation which gave the people the rights they so strongly demanded. Lord Durham's visit to Canada was one of the most fortunate things in the history of British North America. The policy of rewarding those who had stood true to British interests, and also of redressing the grievances which unquestionably existed, healed the serious breach which was threatened both in Upper and Lower Canada.

The part taken during the rebellion by Governor Simpson, as well as the successful exploration of

the Arctic coast at this time by Dease and Simpson at the governor's suggestion, was duly rewarded, in 1839, by the order of knighthood.

It is questionable whether the events through which Governor Simpson passed during the rebellion were favourable to the best interests of civil government in Rupert's Land. As we have seen, in 1835 a council was established for the government of Assiniboia—as the Red River Settlement was officially called—and Governor Simpson was the head of this council. The fact that its members were all appointed by the Hudson's Bay Company in London, though many of them were natural leaders of the people, was likely to rouse a feeling of antagonism, and, on however small a scale, to array the masses against the classes. The officers and retired officers of the Hudson's Bay Company with the privileged clergy certainly dominated. It was probably an unfortunate thing that Governor Simpson, while this new body was becoming fixed in its attitude towards the hitherto ungoverned people of Red River, should have been placed in antagonism to the aggressive movement of Papineau and the French-Canadian malcontents. The suppression of the rebels, the banishment of a number of them, the feeling of victory, the increasing sentiment of loyalty, and the personal reward of knighthood no doubt influenced Sir George and increased in him the feeling of the autocrat, however much this may have been

held in check by his natural good feeling and sense of diplomacy.

That our estimate is not a wrong one may be seen in his action in more fully organizing the judicial staff of the colony, and in his choice of an occupant for the high office of recorder. A young Scottish lawyer in Montreal, named Adam Thom, had taken a noted part in journalism in Montreal during the Papineau rising. Papineau in a moment of passion had declared: "The time has gone by when Europe could give monarchs to America. The epoch is approaching when America will give republics to Europe." Young Thom, with true British fervour, resented such disloyal sentiments, and entered the lists with a series of newspaper letters, signed "Camillus," which were remembered for many a day for their anti-French tone and for their forcefulness.

When the rebellion was over, Lord Durham came, as we have seen, to Canada, bringing with him an exceptionally brilliant staff of assistants. To these he added the powerful young controversialist, Adam Thom, who was versed in Lower Canadian affairs. In 1838 Thom returned with Lord Durham to Britain, and in 1839, the year in which Governor Simpson was knighted, Thom was appointed by the Hudson's Bay Company, at a salary of £700 a year, the first recorder of Red River, or as he was also styled, president of the Red River court. The new recorder came

from Britain by way of New York, and proceeded at once to Fort Garry.

The fourth decade of the century saw Sir George with his aristocratic notions presiding over the council of Assiniboia. His policy of government was, to a certain extent, affected by the influence of the new recorder, who was also a member of the council.

At present the details of the irritation in Red River Settlement are not of importance to our description of Governor Simpson's work as a civil ruler. Suffice it to say that Recorder Thom's influence was felt in restrictions made upon the settlers in their dealing in furs, of which trade the company claimed the exclusive right, and certain regulations of an onerous kind as to letters sent by post from the settlement. Governor Simpson, with great wisdom, allowed all these annoying ordinances to come by way of proclamation from the local governor, Christie, but was no doubt to a certain extent responsible for them. Towards the end of the decade the ferment reached its height in an *émeute* on the part of the Métis, or French half-breeds on the Red River, in which they released from prison one of their compatriots and defied the authorities.

At Governor Simpson's suggestion, Recorder Thom did not take his place upon the bench for a year. Then the recorder, at the instance of Sir George, again presided at a case which gave rise to

popular discontent, and again the governor was compelled to consent to the cessation of his judicial functions. He allowed Judge Thom, however, to serve as clerk of the court, which he did until 1854 when he retired to Britain. During this decade in which Recorder Thom seems to have been the "stormy petrel" of the Red River Settlement, Governor Simpson acted with diplomatic discretion. The troubles culminating in 1849 led to the appointment of a local governor in Red River Settlement, who was not necessarily to be an officer of the fur trade. Sir George Simpson retired from the active administration of affairs in the colony. He was, however, when present, the superior officer, having precedence of the governor at Fort Garry.

Notwithstanding all this, Sir George's visits to Fort Garry or Lower Fort Garry were always notable events. He seems still to have been regarded as the source of ultimate authority in time of difficulty. To all he was accessible. Visits of respect were paid to him by the leading residents on his arrival in the colony, and he no doubt oiled the wheels of government by his skill and good sense.

Sir George during his long career largely kept in his own hand the dealings with the clergy, who received from the Hudson's Bay Company certain grants and support for education and also for church service, and as a rule he satisfied this important class, although he often rallied them in a jocular way for not being as self-denying and devoted to

their tasks as he professed to think they ought to be. On the whole, during his administration of civil affairs in Rupert's Land, especially in the Red River Settlement, a period of nearly forty years, he was regarded as a fair and reasonable man, though credited with being rather astute or even adroit in his management.

CHAPTER V

A JOURNEY ROUND THE WORLD

THE desire to extend the business of the Hudson's Bay Company, and also to see a region, that of Siberia, that resembled his own empire of Rupert's Land, led Sir George Simpson, in the second year after he was knighted, to undertake a journey round the world. This was a very different thing from the Drake or Cook voyages, "ploughing a furrow" round the world by sea. It was really a journey over three continents in addition to crossing the two greatest oceans of the earth.

Two portly volumes containing an account of his voyage, filling nine hundred pages, appeared some five years after this journey was completed. This work is given in the first person as a recital by Sir George of what he saw and passed through. Internal evidence as well as local report on the Red River show another hand to have been concerned in giving it a literary form. It is reported that the facile assistant to the busy governor was Judge Thom, the industrious and strong-minded recorder of the Red River Settlement, who, as we have seen, was a protégé of the governor.

The work is dedicated to the directors of the Hudson's Bay Company. These were nine in num-

ber, and their names are nearly all well known in connection with the trade of this period: Sir John Pelly, long famous for his leadership, Andrew Colville, deputy-governor, who by family connection with Lord Selkirk long held an important place, Benjamin Harrison, John Halkett, another kinsman of Lord Selkirk, H. H. Berens, A. Chapman, M.P., Edward Ellice, M.P., the Earl of Selkirk, the son of the founder, and R. Weynton. Most of these names will be found commemorated in forts and trading-posts throughout Rupert's Land.

Having made preparations for being absent from his important duties for a long period, Sir George Simpson started on his great tour, leaving London on March 3rd, 1841. The ship called at Halifax, but discharged its cargo at Boston, from which port Sir George went by land to Montreal, and started up the fur traders' route via the St. Lawrence and Ottawa rivers on May 4th. Soon Ste. Anne was reached by the canoe brigade. The editor of the work, who knew Montreal and its vicinity as well as the customs of the *voyageurs*, shows his sense of humour in referring to Moore's "Canadian Boat Song" by saying, "At Ste. Anne's rapid on the Ottawa we neither sang our evening hymn nor bribed the Lady Patroness with shirts, caps, etc., for a propitious journey, but proceeded."

Following the old canoe route, Georgian Bay and Lake Superior were soon passed over, though on the latter lake the expedition was delayed about a

week by the ice, and here too Sir George received the sad news of the unfortunate death of his kinsman, Thomas Simpson, who is well known for his Arctic explorations. Taking the route from Fort William by the Kaministiquia River, the travellers hastened through Rainy Lake and river and Lake of the Woods. In referring to Rainy River, Sir George speaks, in the somewhat inflated style of the editor, without the caution which every fur trader was directed to cultivate in making known the resources of the fur country. A decade afterwards, as we shall see, Mr. Roebuck, before the committee of the House of Commons, when Sir George was speaking of Rupert's Land as a barren land, quoted the somewhat fulsome passage.

Following the usual route by Winnipeg River, Lake Winnipeg, and Red River, Fort Garry was soon reached, and here the governor somewhat changed his plans. He determined to cross the prairies by light conveyances, and accordingly on July 3rd, at five in the morning, with his fellow-travellers, with only six men, three horses, and one light cart, the "Emperor of the Plains" left Fort Garry under a salute, and with the shouting of the spectators started on his journey to follow the winding Assiniboine River.

A thousand miles over the prairie in July is one of the most cheery and delightsome journeys that can be made. The prairie flowers abound, their colours have not yet taken on the full blaze of

yellow to be seen a month later, and the mosquitoes are not very troublesome. The weather, though somewhat warm, is very rarely oppressive on the plains, where a breeze may always be felt. This long journey the party made with reckless speed in three weeks; and arrived at Edmonton House to be received with the firing of guns by nine native chiefs of the Blackfoot, Piegan, Sarcee, and Blood Indians, dressed in their finest clothes and decorated with scalp-locks. "They implored me," says the governor, "to grant their horses might always be swift, that the buffalo might instantly abound, and that their wives might live long and look young."

Four days sufficed at Edmonton to provide the travellers with forty-five fresh horses. They speedily passed up the Saskatchewan River, meeting bands of hostile Sarcees, using supplies of pemmican, and soon caught their first view of the white peaks of the Rocky Mountains. Deep muskegs and dense jungles were often encountered, but all were overcome by the skill and energy of the expert fur trader Rowand, their guide. They advanced until surrounded by the sublime mountain scenery, which was sometimes obscured by the smoke from fires prevailing throughout this region, which was suffering from a great drouth. At length Colville, on the Columbia River, was reached, nearly one thousand miles from Edmonton, and this journey, much of it mountain travelling, had averaged forty miles a day. The party from Fort Garry had been travel-

WEDDING TRAIN, EDMONTON

From an engraving in the Public Archives of Canada

ling constantly for six weeks and five days, and they had averaged eleven and a half hours a day in the saddle. The weather had been charming, with a cloudless sky, the winds were light, the nights cool, and the only thing to be lamented was the appearance of the travellers, who, with tattered garments and crownless hats, entered the fort.

Embarking below the Chaudière Falls of the Columbia, the company took boats worked by six oars each, and the water being high they were able to make one hundred, and even more, miles a day, in due course reaching Fort Vancouver. At Fort Vancouver Governor Simpson met Trader Douglas—afterwards Sir James Douglas. He accompanied the party, which now took horses and crossed country by a four days' journey to Fort Nisqually. Here, on the shore of Puget Sound, lay the ship *Beaver*, and embarking on her the party went on their journey to Sitka, the chief place in Alaska, where the governor exchanged dignified courtesies with the Russian governor Etholine, and enjoyed the hospitality of his "pretty and lady-like wife." In addition, Governor Simpson examined into the company's operations (the Hudson's Bay Company had obtained exclusive license of this sleepy Alaska for twenty years longer), and found the trade to be 10,000 fur seals, 1,000 sea otters, 12,000 beavers, 2,500 land otters—foxes and martens—and 20,000 sea-horse teeth.

The return journey was speedily made, the *Beaver*

calling, as she came down the coast, at Forts Stikine, Simpson, and McLaughlin. In due course Fort Vancouver was reached again.

November was now drawing to a close, when two barques dropped down the Columbia River, the one bound for England, and the other, the *Cowlitz*, destined to convey Sir George Simpson to California, the Sandwich Islands, and then to Sitka again. On the third of December the party embarked on the *Cowlitz* at Fort George. The boat was detained for three whole weeks ere the bar at the mouth of the Columbia could be passed, so fierce was the storm which prevailed. The gale abated, the bar was crossed, and Christmas was spent on board with the usual festivities, and with many a toast for absent friends. Down the coast the journey became pleasant, Drake's Bay, supposed to have been reached by that old navigator, was passed. After this the ship was becalmed, but in a few days more Yerba Buena, a small coast town of California, was reached, where there was a Hudson's Bay Company fort, which the governor desired to visit. This point was on the Bay of San Francisco, and the future great metropolis was soon visited. San Francisco numbered at the time two thousand five hundred people, and it seemed a most quiet and unattractive spot. Not being able to land any cargo without government authority, the *Cowlitz* was compelled to pass down the coast to Monterey, the seat of government, in order to make a

customs entry and to visit the Spanish governor, Alvarado.

At Monterey the governor met Francis Ermatinger, who, in the disguise of a Spanish caballero, had come overland to spy out the country and give Sir George a report upon it. On January 19th the party succeeded in leaving Monterey, whence after a stormy passage the vessel reached Santa Barbara. Having been received with the highest honours and having been entertained with every gaiety, Sir George and his party left Santa Barbara regretfully and sailed for the Sandwich Islands on January 26th, 1842. The voyage of two thousand three hundred miles from the Californian coast to Honolulu, the capital of the Sandwich Islands, was a new experience. The air was close and sultry; the albatross and other tropical birds accompanied the vessel, and the time was wiled away with books. On February 10th the tall summit of Mauna Kea, the great volcanic peak of Hawaii, was to be seen; and sailing past the islands, anchor was cast at the entrance of the harbour of Honolulu, where the *Cowlitz* was soon boarded by Mr. Pelly, the agent of the Hudson's Bay Company, and Mr. Allan, a Hudson's Bay Company's officer. They were now among homelike surroundings, for there was a considerable English colony in Honolulu.

Sir George Simpson found in Honolulu a town of nine thousand souls, and was comfortably housed in a former royal palace obtained for the occasion.

Sir George had his love of pomp gratified by the attentions of royalty, and was honoured by King Kamehameha II, who dined with him on board the *Cowlitz*. He was also introduced to the pretty Queen Kaluma, whose name, meaning "the rum," the greatest object of a Sandwich Islander's admiration, amused him. Meeting the premier and others the traveller gained a full knowledge of the state of matters in the Sandwich Islands.

Leaving the islands regretfully, Sir George and his party sailed directly for Sitka, and on the twenty-third day out, April 16th, saw New Archangel. Sir George had now spent more than a year on his travels—three-fourths of the time on the land and one-fourth on the ocean.

At Sitka the party was heartily welcomed by Governor Etholine. Leaving New Archangel Sir George passed down the coast to Stikine, where he found a dreadful tragedy had just been enacted in the death by shooting of John McLaughlin, jr., the young gentleman lately in charge of the Hudson's Bay Company's fort at that point. As this crime had been committed by drunken Indians the governor at once introduced strict regulations prohibiting the use of strong drink in the fur trade. Sir George then returned to Sitka. At this time, on account of the Russians retaining the old style in their time reckoning, the *Cowlitz* changed the date in her log from April 30th to April 18th. Impressed with the fact that Sitka was the dirtiest place he

ever was in Sir George Simpson, having made a treaty with Governor Etholine entirely abolishing the use of spirituous liquors, left the New World to sail westward on May 9th, new style.

The good vessel *Alexander*, Captain Kadnikoff, was now to convey Sir George and his party; and with the very kindest attentions of the "manly and generous" captain, the journey was made from Sitka, around the south coast of the peninsula of Kamchatka in Asia to Okhotsk, on the coast of Siberia, in forty-four days, though in former times the journey had taken three months.

At Okhotsk the company maintained a post. This was situated on a low point, so near the level of the sea that it was inundated when a southerly wind blew. Okhotsk is a village of eight hundred souls; not a tree and hardly a blade of grass is to be seen within miles of the town. The climate is intensely disagreeable. The governor, after accomplishing his errand at Okhotsk, made a bargain, in which he, of course, got the worst, with a local usurer named Jacob to take his party, in eighteen days' time, to Yakutsk, on the Lena, which river they were to ascend. After meeting many caravans and innumerable travellers, and passing through strange experiences the party arrived at Yakutsk to be received with distinction by the local governor Roodikoff, who entertained the travellers with every delicacy, including the strange beverage *kumiss*. Yakutsk proved to be

a town of five thousand inhabitants, more than half of them whites. It is the great centre of Eastern Siberia for the fur trade, and for ivory obtained from the tusks of the many extinct mammoths embedded in the river mud.

On July 18th Governor Simpson's party left Yakutsk by overland journey, to avoid the difficult navigation of the Lena, taking a *britzska* with five horses, and two *telegas* with three each. Arrived at Bestach the party embarked in a tolerably comfortable boat for the officers and a smaller one for the Cossacks and servants. These boats were towed by horses, and progress was very slow. The travellers suffered from mosquitoes, weariness, and loss of sleep, but the food was good.

On August 8th the tedious journey was ended, and at the landing-place carriages, sent by the governor of Irkutsk, met the party. The record states, "that at one stopping-place they breakfasted on eggs, cream, and strawberries, adding to these delicacies of the season in the centre of Asia a little of our pemmican, from the heart of North America —such a picnic between the two continents as neither of them had ever seen before."

At Irkutsk a most hospitable reception met Sir George Simpson. The local governor, M. Patneffsky, provided him with a handsome carriage and four grays, and General Rupert, governor-general of Eastern Siberia, who lived at this point, gave him messages from the Czar. He also met the arch-

bishop of Eastern Siberia, whose hand Sir George cordially shook, when the prelate presented it to be kissed, the hearty governor not being aware of the *gaucherie* he had committed.

Sir George's stay at Irkutsk was the occasion of overflowing hospitality. "Though everything was magnificent," Sir George says, "Siberian entertainments, however, are not without their little drawbacks. Before dinner all the guests drink schnaps out of the same glass, eat caviare and herring with the same fork, and help themselves to preserves with the same spoon; and during dinner changes of knives and forks are unknown." Though Irkutsk had about twenty thousand people it seemed to be in a state of dilapidation and decay.

Leaving Irkutsk on August 15th the overland journey to Tobolsk, the famous stronghold of the Cossacks, was made in twenty days, and the fine old city, famous as the seat of the chivalrous invader Yermac, was entered just as the sun was rising. So rapid had been the governor's journey that they outstripped the courier who had gone ahead of them. Tobolsk is the centre to which the convicts from Russia are sent. The stay of the party at the city was short, and a rush was made to Tiumen, the most ancient settlement of Siberia. At this place of ten thousand souls the travellers were entertained in a thoroughly royal manner by the mayor of the town.

The overland journey through the province of

Perm was uneventful. On September 17th Novgorod was reached. Here two or three hundred thousand people from all parts of Europe and Asia congregate at the most important fair in the world. Hoping soon to reach the western limit of Russia the travellers pushed with great speed through Moscow and on to St. Petersburg. The distance from Okhotsk to St. Petersburg, including stoppages, had occupied ninety-one days, during which time the party had traversed about seven thousand miles.

Thirteen days after leaving St. Petersburg Sir George reached London, "having," as he says in his narrative, "with the exception of the proposed trip to Kiachta, accomplished my journey round the world as originally contemplated, the whole being completed within the space of nineteen months and twenty-six days."

CHAPTER VI

IN HIS LETTERS

PROBABLY no man shows his real thoughts in any way more readily than in his correspondence with his friends. Governor Simpson was an excellent correspondent, and kept the whole of his wide-spread command in hand by letters written promptly and frequently. He had the knack of dealing succinctly and clearly with business matters and then drifting off into a page of what he calls "chit-chat," which was very interesting and was eagerly looked for by his correspondents.

We are to be congratulated in our study of his life that the versatile governor wrote so many letters. In a garret in Queen Street, Edinburgh, the letters and papers of the late James Hargrave, chief factor of the company and for many years master of York Factory, were stored by his son with trusty solicitors. York Factory was for many years the *entrepôt* of all the goods for Rupert's Land, and the place of export for the furs gathered from the Arctic solitudes. Hargrave's correspondence accordingly embraced communications from all parts of the fur traders' territory and from almost all men of prominence in the far West.

Large packages of Governor Simpson's letters

were docketed and left in perfect order by Chief Factor Hargrave, who, upon retiring, treasured these memorials of the past. The writer, through the kindness of their custodian, from the many hundreds of these letters, selected some thirty written during the interesting portion of Governor Simpson's life, beginning with 1830 and including a number of years following.

The governor had at this time been ten years at the helm of the company's affairs, had become acquainted with the work and with the thousands of men under him. He was certainly master of the situation. In a letter from Norway House in June, 1830, the governor writes that a change has taken place in his condition, meaning that he had just been married. Mrs. Simpson had accompanied him to Norway House and he writes that she is to accompany him to York. His wife was a sister of the wife of Chief Factor Finlayson, and on this account Red River Settlement was the governor's residence for several years after his marriage. With the zeal of a Benedict, he writes that Leblanc—a faithful and expert workman—is to be ready to leave York Factory with him and return to Red River Settlement to arrange a house for the wintering of himself and his bride, and he gives orders to his faithful man at York Factory to have his quarters on the bay in good order for his arrival.

In the same letter, however, in which he speaks of his new found felicity, a social shadow falls

across the view. He mentions that a leading factor has been married, and has gone to Moose Factory. He says to Hargrave, "Pray soothe his woman by any argument you can think of, and say she will not be deserted." The meaning simply is that the officer had been married—*mariage du pays*—to a native, and that when he legally married, he pensioned off the woman or had her married to some one else. This bad practice was only too common in certain quarters in the fur country.

Governor Simpson was a strong and sympathetic friend. In a letter dated Red River Settlement, December, 1831, he speaks very feelingly of the death of his friend Mr. Richardson—John Richardson, of the firm of Forsyth, Richardson & Co.—of Montreal. His friend had been a prominent man in the fur trade. The governor speaks of him as "a gentleman of the first standing and character in Canada," and refers to the kindness and attention which he had shown him.

Living happily in the settlement he says, "here we are very happy and gay, but the weather has been very changeable." He mentions the McKenzies and McMillans, leading fur-trading people, the Rev. Mr. and Mrs. Jones, the pioneer clergyman and his wife, of whom Governor Simpson was fond, Dr. Tod, an eccentric trader, and Dr. Hambly, the physician, "the strangest compound of skill, simplicity, selfishness, extravagance, musical taste and want of courtesy I ever fell in with." . . . "The

people are living on the fat of the earth; in short, Red River is a perfect land of Canaan as far as good cheer goes." The governor was plainly happy in the midst of his new-found domestic joys.

In all the governor's letters there is a shrewdness and adroitness that is very marked. He is, indeed, somewhat given to flattery. The great object of every clerk in the service was to rise to the position of a commissioned officer. The governor, in March, 1832, informs Hargrave that he has prophesied at one of the annual gatherings that Hargrave would be among the first to be promoted. He writes, "You are a prodigious favourite with your *bourgeois*." He states, however, that the suggestion to make him chief trader had been opposed in the council. The governor promises that it will not be long delayed, and promotion came, as we have seen, in the following year.

The governor's interest in the people is well shown in a letter written in December, 1832. The crops in the Red River Settlement had been very poor that season, owing to an unusually wet summer and very "unseasonable frosts in the early part of the autumn." He hopes the people may, however, have enough to eat. "You will be sorry to learn," he says, "that Mrs. Simpson continues in very delicate health. She joins in regards to you."

In 1833 the governor himself was exceedingly unwell at Red River Settlement, and he writes

that the traders McMillan and Christie advise him to make a trip to Canada and England. Mrs. Simpson also continued in a very poor state of health. He comforts Hargrave by telling him that he hopes to send him a commission from the next meeting of partners in June at Norway House. In the same year there was a great scarcity of the necessaries of life throughout the country; especially was there a great dearth of pemmican and grease. Turning suddenly from an expression of his sympathy for the people, the governor writes, "Sir Walter Scott is no more; our universally admired and respected fellow-countryman is gone."

An example of the governor's firmness and skill in administering reproof is seen in a letter written from the Red River Settlement in December, 1833. Referring to some unpleasantness between Hargrave and one of his fellow-traders, the writer states that no doubt his correspondent will be happy and comfortable now that the source of the discord is removed. Then he goes on to tell of all the craft (boats) of Red River shopkeepers being stopped in the ice on their way to England from York Factory. The crews of Logan's and Sinclair's had managed to reach Norway House. McDermot's people had not in December been heard from. He then states that the "trippers" blamed Hargrave for delaying them so long at York. The governor says, however, that he and Mr. Christie upheld his officer at the Factory; but privately he states his

fear that Hargrave in his anxiety to dispatch the *Prince George*, the company's ship, on her journey through Hudson Bay to England, had delayed the brigades five or six days.

In the same letter Governor Simpson shows the part he took in religious affairs. The missionaries of the Church of England thus far held the whole ground among the Highland settlers of Red River. The people were somewhat irritated. While the governor sympathized to a certain extent with his fellow-countrymen in their desires, yet he feared dissension, and preferred matters to remain in their existing condition. He says, "have got into the new church (St. John's), which is really a splendid edifice for the Red River people." He says they are now less clamorous about a Gaelic minister. He likewise has a fling at his complaining fellow-countrymen, saying that they had wished to have their private stills, and now "about whiskey they say not one word, that rum is so cheap, and good strong 'heavy-wet' in general use."

Among his chit-chat in May, 1835, he speaks of a promising Scottish officer having gone through his work manfully and being an efficient officer, "which is a feather in his cap." Ballenden afterwards became master of Fort Garry.

In the year 1836 there are many letters. The governor was on the eve of going to England, and after the council at Norway House writes a letter every other day to Hargrave. In most generous

terms he instructs Hargrave to be attentive to Captain Carey and his family. The captain was the new head of the company's experimental farm at Red River Settlement. Extra allowances were to be made for the newcomers, and for three officers at Red River Settlement, as well as greater liberality to be shown to all the gentlemen and clerks.

In another letter of the same month the governor urges that the several brigades should be got off as early as possible, in order that they might all reach their destinations before the setting in of the ice. They were to leave in the following order: Saskatchewan, Columbia, Lac la Pluie (Rainy Lake), Sinclair, and McKenzie (Red River).

The governor has been charged with conniving to degrade the Indians and to prevent the whites obtaining their rights. One evil, however, he continued strongly to oppose, that was the use of strong drink, at least in any general way. We have already seen how on the Pacific coast he entered into a compact with the Russian governor to completely do away with strong drink among the Indians of the coast.

Writing July 6th from Norway House, he says to Hargrave: "Has the allowance of wine regulated by fixed system succeeded at York? I do not at all see that it is necessary to introduce evening brandy-and-water parties for the convenience of the captains. On the contrary I should be glad that it was broken off; let them take their 'whack' at the

dinner table, like other people. When spoken to in England about heavy drinking on shipboard, they said in their defence that it is the custom of the service at the Factories."

In this letter the governor's love for curiosities and display may be seen. He instructs Hargrave to send to him at London the calumet (red pipe) to be handed to him by Trader Ross; also a pair of leather shoes and Indian scalps. He wishes to have the trader send him stuffed birds, well made snowshoes, or anything else curious at the Factories. These objects he showed with great pleasure to the numerous friends whom he gathered around him in the world's metropolis.

Sometimes the governor held a very strong opinion, favourable or otherwise, of certain of his subordinates. Of John Tod, an irrepressible fellow-countryman of his own, he had no good opinion. In 1823 an historian has described with great liveliness Governor Simpson summoning Tod and in bland terms telling him the council had been pleased to send him to New Caledonia, which it is well known was regarded as the Siberia of the fur-traders. The imperturbable doctor was highly pleased and said to the governor that that was the place where he most wished to go. In a letter of 1836 to Hargrave occurs the following: "John Tod has been a most useless and troublesome man of late. He goes home with his wife this summer. He requires more luxury and attention, I understand, than

any governor of Rupert's Land would be indulged with; let him have all that is fit and proper, but not an iota more."

On the other hand the letter says: "If anything seems to you that may be useful to Finlayson at Ungava let it be forwarded. He will have no further supplies till autumn 1838, and perhaps not then. It has been decided to send another man to Ungava."

An interesting group of letters lies before me dated June, 1849. One of these is a letter from Sir George Simpson to Hargrave at York Factory. It is written from Norway House. With it is a letter, or copy of a letter, from Hargrave to Sir George and within this a list of names. The correspondence shows the inner history of how the appointments to high offices were made in Sir George's time. Hargrave had now become a chief factor. He is asked to select such men as he may regard most fit in the company's service for appointment to commissions at the meeting of the following year. This was presumably done by every officer, and then from the lists suggested the appointments were made.

Hargrave suggested two names for chief factor. These were John Rae, the Arctic explorer, and William Sinclair, an old and respected trader. By contemporary lists we find that these two were appointed, and were the only ones appointed to the chief factorship in 1850, showing how much Har-

grave's opinion was valued. He suggested the names of six clerks for the chief traderships.

In the year 1849 the first bishop of Rupert's Land, Bishop Anderson, was appointed, and came out from England in a company's ship by way of York Factory, and thence to Fort Garry. It is amusing to find in the postscript to this letter the evidence that Sir George desired to have his kingdom in proper order for the inspection of the prelate. He says to Hargrave: "I shall be up here, God willing, about June 10th next. Pray take care that there be no drunken scenes at York at any time, more especially when the bishop passes or during the visits of missionaries or strangers, and do not let brigades start on Sundays."

CHAPTER VII

BEFORE THE IMPERIAL PARLIAMENT

THE important fact is to be borne in mind that the Hudson's Bay Company's charter covered only Rupert's Land, i.e., the territory whose waters flow into Hudson Bay. That left the Arctic slope and the Pacific slope, with Vancouver Island, outside their control. For this vast excluded portion of north-west British America the company held permission to trade secured from the imperial parliament. The license was given for twenty-one years. Twice during Governor Simpson's rule this license came up for renewal. The disturbed state of Canada in 1838 led to this being secured by the company with little opposition or criticism.

But in the interval between 1838 and 1859 there had been a complete change. In Red River Settlement itself great unrest had prevailed from 1847 onward. The attention of Canada, now pacified and prosperous, had also been drawn to the fertile plains of the North-West. Accordingly a determined opposition to the granting of the license arose, and embodied itself in the appointment of a powerful committee of the imperial House of Commons which met in 1857.

This committee became famous. The whole

economy of the Hudson's Bay Company was discussed. The committee held eighteen meetings, examined at length twenty-nine witnesses, and thoroughly sifted the evidence. The *personnel* of the committee was brilliant. The Hon. Henry Labouchere, secretary of state, was chairman. Mr. Roebuck and Mr. Gladstone were inquiring and aggressive; Lord Stanley and Earl Russell gave due attention to the proceedings; and Edward Ellice, the old peacemaker of the companies, was combined witness and advocate for the company. Old explorers and pioneers such as John Ross, Dr. Rae, Colonel Lefroy, Sir John Richardson, Colonel Crofton, Bishop Anderson, Colonel Caldwell, and Dr. King gave information.

From time to time, beginning in February and ending in July, the committee met and gathered a vast mass of evidence, making four hundred folio pages of printed matter. It is a storehouse of valuable material about the Hudson's Bay Company. As was proper and necessary, Sir George Simpson was summoned and gave important evidence. He was asked fourteen hundred and twenty-three questions, and his testimony covers forty-four pages of the voluminous report. Sir George was certainly subjected to a severe attack by Mr. Gladstone, Mr. Roebuck, and Mr. Grogan. To say that he came through the ordeal without a scratch would not be true. He was followed with a determined persistence, and his defence of the great monopoly

was only partially successful. He found out the full meaning of Job's desire that his adversary had written a book, for the "Journey Round the World" was his hardest task to defend. With to-day's knowledge of the golden wheatfields of Manitoba, it seems hard to understand his evidence, though it must be said that the large sums of money sunk by the Hudson's Bay Company in its fruitless endeavours to advance agriculture in the Red River Settlement may have influenced his pessimistic testimony as to the capabilities of the country.

While obtaining this enormous mass of evidence, every phase of Rupert's Land was brought out, and incidentally the main features of the thirty-seven years in which Governor Simpson had held sway. The theory of the aggressive element of the committee was that many parts of Rupert's Land, especially the Red River Settlement, were suitable for settlement, and their contention implied that it was simply greed and selfishness that led to the Hudson's Bay Company holding so firmly to its monopoly.

One line of investigation followed was to show that the company had a monopoly and exercised it. It was maintained that the people of Red River Settlement were desirous of exporting their surplus products, and the changes were rung and the case was cited of William Sinclair and Andrew McDermot, leading merchants, who had been refused

transport in their export of tallow. Sir George strenuously maintained that this was simply because the ship accommodation was not sufficient, and that part of the company's goods as well had to be left behind. It came out, however, that Sinclair was suspected of fur-trading, a point on which the company always held a strong position. Much was made of the fact that there was no market for more than a paltry eight thousand bushels of wheat, which were taken by the company. To this Sir George's repeated answer was that the company could not obtain all the wheat supply required, and had at times even to import breadstuffs for its own use.

Efforts were also made to prove that the Hudson's Bay Company did not wish settlers to take up the land, that they would only give a lease, and that obstacles were thrown in the way of settlement. In answering this charge Sir George was probably successful. He reiterated that they had no power to prevent squatters taking their lands, and that the majority of the settlers were squatters, not one of whom had been dislodged from his holding.

It was pointed out that in 1844 a form of deed with tyrannical provisions was introduced, but it was replied that it had been little used. The form of deed required four things of the settler: (1) That he would not deal in furs; (2) That he would neither distribute nor import spirituous liquors; (3) That he would resist a foreign invasion; (4) That

he would promote the religious institutions of the settlement. Pressed for a satisfactory explanation Sir George maintained that the council of Assiniboia had exceeded its powers in this matter.

As to the charge that a regulation had been adopted by which letters would not be sent out from the Fort Garry post-office for those who had been suspected of participation in the fur trade, Sir George denied any knowledge of the matter, although from the noise made about the affair it is hard to believe the governor could have failed to hear of it.

The battle royal was fought, however, on the capacities of the country to support a large population. Sir George on this point took a surprisingly firm, and even defiant attitude. Categorically asked whether a province could not be laid out which would give a livelihood to a large body of settlers, Sir George with decision replied: "I do not think settlers would go to the Red River from the United States or anywhere else for the purpose of settlement."

It was with delicious irony that his tormentor then read to Sir George the description from his own "Journey Round the World" of the country lying between Red River and the Rocky Mountains: "Beautiful country, lofty hills, long valley, sylvan lakes, bright green, uninterrupted profusion of roses and bluebells, softest vales, panorama of hanging copses," and asked him if he had changed

his mind. The only reply made by the governor was, "Yes, there were a great many flowering shrubs."

At another time Sir George was maintaining that the country could not support a population on account of the "poverty of the soil," that in the district spoken of the earth was frozen the year round, that any time in summer "frozen earth" could be reached by digging a foot and a half into the soil; then he maintained that the want of fuel would make settlement impossible, that the locusts would devour every green thing, and that floods were so prevalent that settlers would be driven out. "I have myself," said the governor, "paddled over the roofs of some of the houses in my canoe."

With a scathing tone his tormentor again read from the fatal book, speaking of Rainy River: "Nor are the banks less favourable to agriculture than the waters themselves to navigation, resembling in some measure those of the Thames near Richmond. From the very brink of the river there rises a gentle slope of green sward, crowned in many places with a plentiful growth of birch, poplar, beech, elm, and oak. Is it too much for the eye of philanthropy to discern, through the vista of futurity, this noble stream, connecting as it does the fertile shores of two spacious lakes, with crowded steamboats on its bosom and populous towns on its borders?"

Sir George could not extricate himself, but it is only fair that we should remember that his versatile

editor, Recorder Thom, had made up his book, and it was no doubt the eloquence and imagination of the editor which was responsible for these highly-coloured and poetic flights. The intensity of the situation was all the greater, because Sir George could not disown the book or make known its history.

Sir George's testimony as regards the difficulties attending the practice of agriculture might be summed up in the expression which he used in regard to the approach to the country through British soil, namely: "That the difficulties were insuperable unless the Bank of England were expended on it." But his answer as to the treatment of the Indians by the company, the degree of law and order maintained by the company, and the general encouragement given to the missionaries in their religious and educational work, was on the whole very satisfactory.

Whatever criticisms may have been made as to the Indians he was able to show that a benevolent and just policy had always been employed towards them. The charges as to starvation of the natives on the shores of Labrador were not fastened on the company; and it was made clear that there was no title a North-West Indian was prouder to carry than that of an employé or customer of the Hudson's Bay Company.

Sir George was able to show that in many cases missionaries had been given free passage to the

country in the company's ships and boats, that a considerable sum of money was spent annually in chaplaincies, and in supporting schools, while nothing more was taken from the pockets of the people than a four per cent. tariff on imports, which tax bore also upon the company, while life and property were surprisingly safe. Much to the astonishment of his questioners, Sir George was able to point to the fact that only nineteen capital crimes had been committed over the whole vast territory during the thirty-seven years of his governorship. This was all the more remarkable as the small population of only eight thousand souls in Red River Settlement made it difficult to carry on government, and to this was added a certain restlessness which the governor described as "arising from the love of mischief-making on the part of some of our *second rate half-gentry*."

Thanks to this inquiry many things were made plain: the whole financial system, the plan of management, the appointment of officers, the simple state of society in Red River Settlement, and the provision for the support of religious institutions arising from the Leith bequest and the gift of the company.

The committee did its work well, and was compelled to decide in opposition to the governor's contentions. Those who have lived to see Rupert's Land at the beginning of the twentieth century, and have passed by its vast wheatfields and com-

fortable homes, will realize how far astray he was, and at the same time reflect on how utterly untrustworthy may be our honest judgments.

The committee, whose valuable report was cordially adopted by the House of Commons, recommended that it is "important to meet the just and reasonable wishes of Canada to assume such territory as may be useful for settlement; that the districts of the Red River and the Saskatchewan seem the most available; and that for the order and good government of the country arrangements should be made for their cession to Canada." It was also agreed that those regions where settlement was impossible should be left to the exclusive control of the Hudson's Bay Company for the fur trade.

The committee recommended that Vancouver Island should be made independent of the company, and also that the mainland territory of British Columbia should be united with the island.

Some three or four years after the eventful sittings of this committee, and while the old régime still held sway, the veteran emperor of the traders died. He had been much excited over the visit of the Prince of Wales to Canada. This over, he had proceeded on his trip to Red River as usual. It is said that he reached Sault Ste. Marie, but was too ill to proceed farther. He returned to Lachine, and there, after a short illness at his home, passed away in 1860.

Though such writers as McLean, who had been

in the company's service and had a grievance, do not hesitate to say that his "was an authority combining the despotism of military rule with the strict surveillance and mean parsimony of the avaricious trader," in summing up his life the writer may say: Governor Simpson lifted the fur trade out of the depth into which it had fallen, harmonized the hostile elements of the two companies and made them one brotherhood, reduced order out of chaos in the interior, helped various expeditions for the exploration of Rupert's Land, and on the whole was a beneficent ruler. His management of the financial concerns of the Hudson's Bay Company was such as to gain him the approbation of his own country and of the whole financial world.

CHAPTER VIII

CANADA'S DEBT TO THE FUR COMPANIES

THE infant life of Canada was nourished by the fur traders. The new impulse given to France in the last year of the sixteenth century by Chauvin's charter to trade for furs held within it untold possibilities for the development of Canada. French gentlemen and soldiers came forth to the New World seeking excitement in the western wilds, and hoping also to mend their broken fortunes. There were scores of such at Quebec and Montreal, but especially at Three Rivers on the St. Lawrence. Nicolet led the way to the fur country; Joliet gave up the church for furs; Duluth was a freebooter, and the charge against him was that he systematically broke the king's ordinance as to the fur trade; La Salle sent the first vessel—the *Griffin*—laden with furs down the lakes, where she was lost; the iron-handed Tonty deserted the whites and threw in his lot with the Indians as a fur trafficker; and La Veréndrye, one of the greatest of the early Frenchmen charged with making great wealth by the fur trade, says in his heart-broken reply to his persecutors: "If more than 40,000 livres of debt which I have on my shoulders are an advantage, then I can flatter myself that I am very rich."

Shortly after French Canada became British, it was seen that so lucrative a traffic as that in pelts should not be given up. Curry, Finlay and Henry, sen., pluckily pushed their way beyond Lake Superior in search of wealth, and found it. The Montreal merchants made the trade up the lakes the foundation of Montreal's commercial supremacy in Canada; and the North-West Company, which they founded, only did what the great English company had been doing with their motto, "*Pro pelle cutem*" for a hundred years on the shores of Hudson Bay.

It is evident to the most casual observer that the fur trade was an important element in the building up of Canada, not only in wealth but also in some of our higher national characteristics. The *coureurs de bois* and the canoemen stood for much in the days of our infancy as a new nation.

While we delight to see the sonorous Indian words chosen as the names for our New World rivers and lakes, counties and towns, yet we rejoice too that our pioneers are thus commemorated. The names of all the French pioneers mentioned are to be found fastened on the region which they explored. Fraser, Thompson, Stuart, Quesnel, Douglas, Finlayson, and Dease have retained their hold even in the face of such musical terms as Chipewyan, Metlakahtla, Assiniboine, and Muskegon. Winnipegosis and Manitoba forts have borne the names of our three traders,

Mackenzie, Lord Selkirk, and Simpson, and Fort Alexandria also commemorates the first of these. Rivers and islands, counties, towns, mountains and vast regions of territory are all known by the names of the trio whose fortunes we have been following.

The great explorer leads the way for the development of his country, stimulates inquiry as to the resources of the land he finds, and awakens the desire in other breasts to follow if not excel him in his discoveries. The map maker, the mineral prospector, the lumberer, and the tourist are all dependent on him as their guide. What Columbus is to the New World as a whole, the explorer is to the special field he discovers, and his fame, if not so great, must yet be akin to that of the man who ploughed the first furrow across the Atlantic.

The fur trader is also the pioneer of settlement. It is quite true that there is an antagonism between the fur trader and the settler. The fur trader seeks to keep the beaver, the mink, and the fox alive that he may take toll of them year after year ; when the settler comes the beaver dam is a thing of the past, and the fox flees far away to his forest lair. Yet inasmuch as the settler is permanent, and the trader transient, the meeting of the two has the inevitable result of driving off the trader. This cannot be helped, it is the trader's misfortune ; he must find "fresh woods and pastures new," and then when

his fur-trading days are done he must resort to the life of the settler and spend the sunset of his days in village or clearance.

It was the old Hudson's Bay Company led by Lord Selkirk that introduced the Highland settlers on Red River, and decreed that Fort Garry should be the centre around which gathered the Red River Settlement, which in time became the city of Winnipeg. Fort Victoria on Vancouver Island, chosen by Trader James Douglas as the dépôt of the fur trade, has become the capital of British Columbia and the gem of the Pacific coast. All over Rupert's Land the places chosen by the fur traders have become the centres where has grown up the trade of to-day. Portage la Prairie was a fort, so was Brandon, so was Qu'Appelle, so was Edmonton, so was Fort William, and many others. In hundreds of cities on the American continent the old fur traders' fort was the first post driven down to mark the establishment of the commerce of the future day.

Sir George Simpson fought a losing battle when he sought to keep a Chinese wall round his fur preserve. It was impossible to maintain this splendid isolation. Prejudice, misrepresentation, charter rights, and rocky barriers could not stop the inevitable movement. The sleepy fur trader in his dream hears approaching the sound of the bee—"a more adventurous colonist than man"—and mutters in his sleep:—

> "I listen long
> To his domestic hum, and I think I hear
> The sound of that advancing multitude
> Which soon shall fill these deserts."

It must be so!

No country was ever in the position to need the fur trade in its early history as much as old Canada. Early Canada was covered with heavy forests. The St. Lawrence, its chief artery, was difficult to navigate. Its first colonists were all poor—fleeing away from the despotic persecution of victorious American revolutionists, leaving everything behind them, or crossing the Atlantic because of hard financial conditions in the motherland. Moreover, Canada is northern and nature is not so prolific as she is further south. Hence long years elapsed before poverty was driven out, and peaceful plenty came.

Now the northerly situation of Canada was very favourable for the production of fur-bearing animals. Furs are very valuable, and are so light and may be contained in such small space that the trapper may carry a fortune in one single pack upon his back. This made trade possible over thousands of miles to the interior, through the agency of the birch-bark canoe, which the redman so valued as to call it the gift of the *manitou*. So while fifty years were passing in Little York (Toronto), the capital of Upper Canada, with the most painful and slow steps of improvement, Montreal was the mart of a most valuable trade. The fur-trading merchants became

nabobs. Forsyth, Richardson, McTavish, Frobisher and many others became wealthy, bought seigniories, became prominent figures in public life, were looked up to as their natural leaders by their French-Canadian *voyageurs*, and retired from business to live in their palatial abodes—the "lords of the north"—or to retire as did Sir Alexander Mackenzie and others to the motherland and spend their remaining days as country gentlemen.

The same thing has continued from the earliest days till now. Not only can a man of fair education, who rises with reasonable rapidity in his forty years or more of service for the company, have at the end of his time say from six to eight thousand pounds sterling, but clerks, post-masters, and labouring-men may all leave the service with proportionate savings. True the life may be long, hard, and unattractive, but expenses are small and savings large. The Red River Settlement grew to twelve thousand people in 1870, five-sixths of its people having come through the channel of the fur trade.

No doubt in the present condition of Canada the fur trade does not occupy so important a place. The farmer tends to overtake the hunter in fortune, just as the settler must in time drive out the trader. But the very greatest service was rendered the country by the fur traders in early Canada supplying a class of capitalists who spent their money in giving employment to others, organized first lines of transport by boat, filled the sea with their sailing vessels to carry

MOOSE FACTORY, 1854

From a coloured engraving in the Public Archives of Canada

freight and passengers, and afterwards introduced steamships to thread the rivers, cross the lakes and even the Atlantic Ocean.

Montreal became a centre for wholesale trade. Goods could be supplied to the settlers in Western Canada; then when transport of a better kind was needed, the capital and energy of Montreal merchants became the basis for building lines of railway, and for giving the farmer with his products access to the great markets of the world. The chain of connection is complete in Canada between the fur trader's pioneer work and the present state of Canadian trade and commerce.

The fur trade was also a school for the development of such high moral qualities as courage and tact. In no other circumstances does so much depend upon the personal qualities of the man. The fur trade is carried on in the solitudes, far from organized society. The dealings are with savages who are kept down by no visible authority, who are ignorant and may be appealed to by greed, jealousy, or superstition to turn against the trader and injure him. Thus it was often dangerous to go far from the base of supplies and venture almost single-handed among untutored tribes.

The experiences of the fur companies in such circumstances have been very remarkable. At first there may have been violence done by the natives to the traders. The brothers Frobisher on their first visits to Rainy Lake were robbed, the ship *Ton-*

quin on the Pacific coast was attacked and many employés killed, massacres of the traders took place at Fort St. John and Kamloops in British Columbia, and Chief Factor Campbell was attacked in his occupation of the head waters of the Stikine and on the Upper Yukon. Yet it is marvellous that for more than two centuries, or including the French régime, three centuries, the traders have freely mingled with the savage tribes and have been objects of envy from their possession of valuable goods, but have succeeded by sturdiness and good management in getting control of the wildest Indians.

Now this was chiefly accomplished by the good character of the traders. The men of the Hudson's Bay Company especially, but to a certain extent also all the fur traders of British America have been men of probity and fairness. Just and honest treatment of an Indian makes him your friend. The terrible scenes of bloodshed enacted by the Indians among the Americans in the Western States can, in almost every instance, be traced to dishonesty and wrong on the part of the traders and Indian agents of that country. British fur companies have been, on the whole, dominated by a wise desire to retain the confidence of the Indian, and have proved the statement true that Britain alone has shown an ability to deal justly with and to gain the confidence of inferior races.

In reaching this end great determination, watch-

fulness, and caution are developed in the trader. He must be firm, must never let an Indian imagine he can master him, and many a time must be ready to use the "knock-down" argument in the case of the impudent or the intractable. Physically and mentally the successful trader requires to be a man among men. Thus the fur trade has cultivated a manliness, straightforwardness, and decision of character which has proved a heritage of greatest value to the Canadian people.

Wherever the Hudson's Bay Company fort is established there flies the Union Jack. On Sundays and holidays it was always unfurled, and the lesson that there was something higher than trade was thereby taught, for on those days traffic ceased. The companies were always on the side of law and order. The loyal sentiment was their only way of governing the Indians, and it became a part of their settled policy to "honour the king." In the War of the Revolution the traders along the frontier were true to Britain, and the celebrated capture of Michilimackinac in 1812 was accomplished by a British force of less than two hundred men—one hundred and sixty of them Nor'-Wester *voyageurs* under Captain Roberts. In the struggle of the Canadian rebellion we have seen that from Governor Simpson down all the fur traders were against rebellion and in favour of law.

Undoubtedly hand-in-hand with the United Empire Loyalists, the Nor'-Wester influence did much

to keep Canada true to British institutions, while the presence of the Hudson's Bay Company and the Selkirk colony in Rupert's Land, and the traders led by Chief Factor James Douglas on the coast, were the means of preserving to the British Crown the greater Canada which was an object of desire for half a century to the Americans. The traders did their full share in maintaining and perpetuating the loyalty which to-day is so strong a sentiment in the breasts of Canadians.

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SIR JAMES DOUGLAS

SIR JAMES DOUGLAS

From a photograph

THE MAKERS OF CANADA SERIES

Anniversary Edition

SIR JAMES DOUGLAS

BY

ROBERT HAMILTON COATS

AND

R. E. GOSNELL

Illustrated under the direction of A. G. Doughty, C.M.G., Litt.D.
Deputy Minister, Public Archives of Canada

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REVISER'S PREFACE

AFTER undertaking in the first instance to write the *Life of Sir James Douglas* for the Makers of Canada Series, being then in the employ of the government of British Columbia, and formerly having been Provincial Librarian and Archivist, I became editor of the *Colonist*, Victoria, and in the circumstances of high pressure of daily newspaper work, the writing became a task rather than the pleasure that a reasonable amount of leisure would have imparted to it. As a consequence I had not time to follow that most excellent injunction to say the most in the least possible words, and wrote considerably beyond the limits prescribed for my volume. Having delivered my manuscript in the fall of 1906 or early in 1907, it was returned to me for the purpose of condensation; but as I was on the point of leaving for England on business that would occupy all my time, I was obliged to request the publisher to secure the services of some other person for the purpose. Fortunately for the *Life*, the manuscript was handed over to Mr. R. H. Coats, then in the Department of Labour, Ottawa, and now Dominion Statistician, whose work in that capacity has been notable and of almost

inestimable service to Canada. I have not seen my original copy for nearly twenty years, but I feel quite certain that to Mr. Coats, as editor and in part author, the *Life of Sir James Douglas* owes its excellencies of exactitude and literary form with which it has been credited.

So having been entrusted by the present publishers with the revision of the *Life* for the purpose of a new edition, I have not found it necessary or desirable to make any alterations either in matter or form, excepting for the cutting of passages that overlapped with other volumes in the series, and a few changes in the matter of names, etc. A series of appendixes has been added to the former edition to amplify the text in some respects. For these alterations and additions, I am wholly responsible—and not in any sense Mr. Coats, whose name appears along with mine on the title page.

I may say in conclusion that as time goes on, the name of Sir James Douglas becomes more and more identified with the early history of British Columbia in the minds of the people, and more and more honoured in memory. Great interest, it is gratifying to state, has developed in the history, reminiscences, and traditions of that province. Much of the interest clusters around the life and times of James Douglas. Some years ago, locally in Victoria, a chapter of the I. O. D. E. was created and named in his honour, and annually on the anniversary of

the founding of Fort Victoria his memory has been honoured by an impressive social function. Just recently, the Pioneers and Native Sons of British Columbia decided on establishing a Douglas Day, to be celebrated annually. The first of these celebrations was held in Vancouver in November, 1925, and so as the years speed on a great figure in western history will be kept in mind, probably for centuries to come, and in due time will have been embalmed in popular tradition as, in a sense, the hero and father of his people

R. E. GOSNELL.

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CHAPTER I

THE NORTH-WEST COAST

BRITISH Columbia, as we know it to-day, has had an organic existence only since the year 1859, or, at the earliest, if we include the colony of Vancouver Island, since 1849. Its history, therefore, as Crown colony and province of the Dominion of Canada, is contemporary with the lives of some still living. In a previous era, however, the region had bulked large in the annals of the fur trade; and in a period still more remote it was a part of the romantic story of the conquest of the Pacific. If, therefore, we would penetrate beyond results to ultimate causes, to see the community in its making and the material which the most active of its makers found to his hand, as well as the development which sprang from that beginning, we should find that the inquiry, notwithstanding the remoteness of the region from the political life of the continent with which we are most familiar, and the recent date at which its organization was effected, leads far into the past. We must begin, indeed, if we would trace the stream of western history to its source, with a time almost coeval with the earliest European knowledge of America and but little subsequent to the landing of Columbus on its eastern shores.

The fact that the progress of colonization on this continent received a very remarkable impetus from the western side, has not always been given emphasis. Three causes have been commonly assigned for the early spread of civilization in America. The original discovery of the continent came as a result of that spirit of adventure, born of the Renaissance, which, coupling itself with the demand of the trader for a short route to the Orient, sent navigators into every sea. Two centuries before Columbus, Marco Polo and his following of mediæval travellers had fired the imagination of the age with the glories of Cathay. The dream that a path to these might lie by the western ocean, or, when the barrier of two continents stretched itself in the way, by the rivers and mountain passes of the new land (or, it might be, by some "Strait of Anian" in the sea itself), was ever before the eyes of that daring race of sailors and discoverers who traced the coasts and penetrated the pathless wildernesses of the New World. The second compelling force manifested itself later, when to the religious zeal of Europe, still seething from the Reformation, came the knowledge that America had a native population sunken in savagery and spiritual darkness. This operated in two directions: the heathen brought the missionary, most dauntless of martyrs; on the other hand, those who in an age of relentless persecutions looked with longing eyes for a land of freedom,

found suddenly a whole continent open to them where opposing bigotries were unknown. Of such were the Jesuit Fathers and the Puritans of New England. "If Columbus discovered the new continent," says Mr. Goldwin Smith, "the Puritans discovered the New World." But a third factor, strong as these, was the lust of gain. To the covetous eyes of the Spaniard, mighty on sea and land, who had already forced his way by Cape Horn to the Pacific, stood revealed the wonderful riches of Mexico and Peru. These hapless countries he overran with fire and sword, plundered them of their gold, and trampled their ancient and remarkable civilizations into the dust. The return of the Spanish galleons laden with treasure set Europe on fire. Of all the influences that in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries turned the eyes of the adventurer towards America, greed was undoubtedly the most powerful. It is of special import to the present purpose because of the far-reaching part it played in the development of enterprise on the Pacific Ocean.

It is not the intention here to outline the history of the entire Pacific coast of America, but to trace briefly the more important events which led to the discovery of the north-west portion of it and to the ultimate domination of British interests therein. And here, across the path of the story at its outset, falls, and for two centuries abides, the mighty shadow of Spain. It was fortunate for the

establishment of British influence in North America and especially on the western shores of the continent, that a people so powerful as the Spaniards in the sixteenth century did not possess the genius for colonization. Impetuous and daring the Spanish spirit was; but the greed and cruelty ingrained in its very fibre cast a blight on whatever it touched and left no other monument than enduring hate. Such power could not finally prevail. War and spoliation led the Spaniards, at various times, far northward from their base in Mexico; but the vast Pacific slope, so full of latent possibilities, remained, for as long as their influence overshadowed it, unvisited and unknown.

The early operations of Spain in the Pacific, however, are of importance as the first of a series of events which have had an immediate influence upon present conditions in the northern and western portions of America. Other contributing agencies from the side of the Pacific were the Russian occupation of Alaska and the establishment of British trade interests by sea on the north-west coast. Intermingled with these were the later activities of the overland traders and discoverers of the North West Company, the Hudson's Bay Company and the Astorians, who fought their way through the mountains to the Pacific under the flags of their nations. It will be of interest to note from the earliest point how these several influences arose and entered into combination.

Balboa was the first white man to see the Pacific—marching his men mid-deep into its surf and proclaiming the sovereignty of Spain over its mighty waters, "for all time, past, present, or to come, without contradiction, . . north and south, . . . from the Pole Arctic to the Pole Antarctic." Mexico the ancient seat of the Toltecs and Aztecs, was discovered five years later, in 1518. In 1519, it was conquered by Cortez, and the civilization of Montezuma was overthrown. Magellan, a Portuguese, who had joined the service of Spain under Charles V, in 1520, completed his memorable voyage around the world, sailing through the straits of his name and thence to the Philippine Islands, where he lost his life. This opened the way to the Orient by the Southern Ocean. Vanschouten and Lemaire, two Dutch navigators, also doubled Cape Horn, passing outside of the course held by Magellan. These and other voyages, while they threw light on one of the vexed problems of the day, disappointed anticipations both as to the nearness of Asia and the nature of the passage. They led, however, to greater zeal in the prosecution of discovery on the continent of America itself, in which, especially in southern latitudes, Spain was the leader and, at first, almost alone. There followed the conquest of Peru by Pizarro in 1532 and 1533, when the rule of the Incas, more enlightened in many respects than that of Spain herself, was

overwhelmed. This epoch of blood has been made a household tale by Prescott: it is referred to here only in connection with the immediate result it had of further whetting the appetite of the Spaniards for plunder, in pursuance of which they began, soon after, a series of excursions northward.

One of the earliest of these expeditions was made, under the direction of Cortez, in 1528, by Pedro Nuñez Maldonado, who surveyed the coast for one hundred leagues, as far as the river Santiago. Another was despatched in 1532, under the command of Mendoza, who penetrated to the 27th parallel of north latitude. A third set out a year later, consisting of two ships commanded by Grijalva and Becerra, the former of whom discovered the Revillagigedo Islands, while the latter reached the 23rd parallel. Nuño de Guzman, governor of the Spanish possessions on the Gulf of Mexico and the rival of Cortez, next traced the western shore of the continent as far as the mouth of the Colorado River. It is unnecessary to mention all the voyages made by Cortez himself, by Ulloa, Allarçon and Cabrillo, prior to 1543, by which time the country between the 41st and 43rd parallels—or what is now the northernmost limits of the state of California—had been reached by different explorers. Meanwhile the Spaniards had established themselves firmly on both seaboards of Central America and Mexico. The expeditions by land were equally as notable as those by sea, and

the hardships which they involved even more terrible. The two friars, Marcos and Honorata, with Francisco Vasquez de Coronada and Fernando de Soto were the most celebrated leaders, and the wished-for goal was the discovery of new Mexicos and Perus. But Spain was not to repeat adventures like these. The actual and more important result was one that in itself she valued little—the determination of the coast of California and the exploration of a vast extent of the interior.

Coincidently with the earlier enterprises of Spain, we are introduced, amid clash of swords, decks slippery with blood and desperate battle indescribable, to the British type of adventurer in the Pacific –Francis Drake, the first Englishman to sail a ship on its waters. Sea-dog and pirate as he was, he lives forever in the memory of his countrymen as the scourge of their ancient enemies. With the immortals, Hawkins, Frobisher, and Cavendish, he was one of the founders of the navy of England. Rounding Cape Horn in 1578, he burst upon the Spanish coast, eager for revenge and treasure. The towns were unprepared for his coming, and could offer but little resistance. So inconceivable to the Spaniard was an Englishman in the Pacific, that their ships, heavily laden with the gold and jewels of Peru, dipped colours and waited for him as a friend. Drake's story is so wild, so terrible, as to be almost alone of its kind.

Deep was the memory of his voyage to the Spanish coast; for a century after, his name was never spoken but with horror. The age was one of relentless cruelty and reprisals, and Drake gave less perhaps than he would have received. His visit to the Pacific is important as establishing the earliest claim of England to an interest in that ocean. In the spring of 1579 he sought to return by a northern route, in order to avoid the Spaniards; but after reaching parallel 42° 03′—or, according to some, as far north as the southernmost islands of Alaska—and finding no avenue of escape, he retraced his steps and put in at a safe harbour for repairs. The bay a little north of San Francisco, commonly known as Drake's Bay, was the point selected for this purpose. There he remained for some time, having assumed, on behalf of Queen Elizabeth, the sovereignty of the North American coast, to which he gave the title of New Albion. His ship, laden with booty, carried him, in the end, safely home by way of the Philippines, the Indian Ocean and the Cape of Good Hope, arriving at Portsmouth on September 26th, 1580. Cavendish, with hardly less of battle and plunder, followed much the same course as Drake, in the year 1587.

One who belongs to the century of Drake and whose name is inseparably associated with the waters of British Columbia, was Juan de Fuca,

said to have been a native of Cephalonia. His real name was Apostolos Velerianos. According to Michael Lok, de Fuca, while in the service of the viceroy of Mexico, commanded, in 1592, an expedition northward, in the course of which he entered the strait now known by his name, between Vancouver Island and the state of Washington. He sailed some distance eastward, his course, as described by himself, corresponding in the main with the general direction of the waters as we now know them. He returned, however, before emerging northwards into the sea, somewhat rashly concluding that he had discovered the traditional Strait of Anian. But this voyage is now generally regarded as apocryphal. It is indeed, doubtful if such a man as de Fuca ever existed.

During the period covered by these and other early voyages in the Pacific, the struggle for the sovereignty of the New World and the trade of the distant West—a struggle destined to continue for nearly three hundred years—had already begun amongst the maritime nations of Europe. The powers were Spain, Great Britain, France, Portugal and Holland. The first, having established herself in Central and South America, conquered the Philippines and secured a foothold in the East Indies. Portugal extended her trade to India and

the South Seas. A new France arose in the valley of the St. Lawrence. Great Britain planted vigorous colonies on the North Atlantic coast. Dutch navigators, throughout, laboured persistently in the wake of their competitors. Here was ample field for opposing interests. It was, however, the pretentions of the Spaniards to exclusive domain in the south and west that were most bitterly resented by the rival nations. By virtue of prior discovery and of the papal grant of 1493, no nation of Europe, with the one exception of Portugal, was recognized by the court of Madrid as having any claim to occupy territory in America, or to navigate the western Atlantic or any part of the Pacific. The exceptional position of Spain had been in a measure recognized by Great Britain in 1670, and confirmed by the Treaty of Utrecht in 1713, though the terms of these and other agreements were so vague, as applied to a new and unknown continent, that they served rather to increase than to prevent confusion. It was, however, the efforts of England to establish trade relations with the Spanish dominions which constituted the cause of nearly all the disputes between the two countries subsequent to the middle of the sixteenth century.

In connection with this keen trade rivalry, which has to do with much that follows, the difference often remarked between the policy of Great Britain and the continental powers should be borne in mind from the outset. In the development of British

commercial and colonial empire, incomparably more has been effected by the enterprise of private individuals than by government initiative. Certain of the Tudor and Stuart sovereigns encouraged, and even undertook, commercial ventures, and the fact lent them a support among the trading classes which stood them in good stead during periods of political unrest and financial embarrassment. But the practice was never extended into a principle. The continental colonial policy, however, and notably that of France and Spain, was almost wholly paternal, designed to reflect the greatest possible glory on the reigning monarch. The new possessions were accordingly surrounded by a rigour of control that ultimately crippled all expansion. On the other hand, under the British policy, as exemplified on the Atlantic seaboard of America, in the voyages of British traders to the Pacific, or in the operation of the Hudson's Bay Company in the interior of the continent, enterprise was ever untrammelled and individual. To-day, as a consequence, North America is the home of a free and progressive people, while over the southern continent still hovers the spirit of its Spanish origin,—restlessness, revolt, and a lack of the genius of organization and initiative.

From the days of Drake's exploits, the Pacific coast between the 43rd and the 55th parallels of latitude remained for upwards of one hundred and eighty years unvisited by any European navi-

gator. Roughly, the period embraces the whole of the seventeenth, and three-quarters of the eighteenth, century. Meanwhile, under the Spanish king's instructions, the coast of California had been surveyed again by Sebastian Vizcaino, one of whose ships reached the 43rd parallel in January, 1603. The interval also included the establishment of the Jesuit missions, and their subsequent expulsion from the Spanish dominions; sundry voyages and discoveries in the Southern Pacific; the formation and disappearance of a British colony in the Falkland Islands; the establishment of Spanish settlements and Dominican missions on the west coast of California, from which the Mexican Creole of the present day is sprung; and, most important of all, the gradual waning of the power of Spain. On the whole, the record on the Pacific was one of almost sheer stagnation. On the Atlantic coast, during the same period, nations had been born and cradled. France had founded a great colony, and had lost it to England. England had planted the seeds of the United States of America. The whole eastern continent was subdued to the Anglo-Saxon. In the great plains of the interior, an empire within an empire, the Hudson's Bay and North West Companies already bore sway. Still further north and west, Russia had made good a foothold that was eventually to include dominions nearly twice as large as the British Columbia of to-day.

Before entering upon the period which was to decide forever to whom the ascendency in these waters should belong, namely, the closing quarter of the eighteenth century, certain final efforts of Spain to perpetuate her exclusive grasp upon the Pacific must be briefly dealt with. They followed somewhat tardily upon the conclusion of an agreement in 1763 with Great Britain and France, whereby New Orleans and Louisiana west of the Mississippi passed to Spain, while Canada and the other French possessions in North America, as well as Florida, were awarded to Great Britain.

Spain had at last awakened to the fact that the maintenance of her sovereignty in the New World called for decisive action. But official corruption, the forerunner of national decay, had long ago set in, and its effects were in no place more conspicuous than in America. Galvez, an officer of the court of Castile, was sent as *visitador*. On his arrival, he at once determined upon the establishment of colonies and garrisons on the west coast of California. Pursuant to this policy, an effort was made to explore the coast north of Cape Blanco, on or about the 43rd parallel, beyond the present boundary of California, to which point Vizcaino had penetrated in 1602-3. In the year 1774, Juan Perez, accompanied by Estevan José Martinez, made a notable voyage from San Blas in the corvette *Santiago*. He was commissioned to proceed to the 60th parallel, where it was assumed

the north-west passage from the Atlantic would be found, and to explore the coast line southward. After reaching the northern islands of the Queen Charlotte group, however, Perez steered homeward, passing some time in a bay which he called Port San Lorenzo,—identified by some as Nootka Sound on Vancouver Island, the anchorage of Cook some fourteen years later, but more probably, according to recent investigations, a small bay situated between Point Estevan and the Escalante Reef. Upon his return to Monterey, the *Santiago* was re-commissioned under command of Heceta, with Perez as one of his officers. The corvette was accompanied on her second voyage by the schooner *Sonora*, commanded by the celebrated Don Juan Francisco de la Bodega y Quadra, with Maurelle as pilot. This expedition was by far the most notable of all the Spanish voyages to the north-west coast and ranks high in the annals of discovery in the Pacific.

With varying fortunes, the vessels steered northward. Off the strait of Juan de Fuca, as they supposed, they were blown southward by a heavy gale. At the Isla de Dolores, subsequently named Destruction Island, a boat's crew was murdered by the Indians. The vessels became separated, and Heceta, losing heart, set sail for Monterey. On the way he in part redeemed the venture from failure by sighting, from twenty miles off shore, the entrance to the great Columbia River; but, with a

crew so stricken with scurvy that they could neither reef sail nor drop anchor, he could venture no nearer to confirm the discovery. He was the first white man to see that famous stream. The promontory of San Roque, near by, he probably identified. Meanwhile, Quadra and Maurelle kept bravely on, despite incredible hardships and a greatly diminished crew, passing and naming a number of coast features now well-known. Anchoring finally in the Bay of Islands, on the north side of Edgecumbe mountain, Quadra took formal possession of the country in the name of Spain. Returning southward, he surveyed the coast line with the utmost care, to discover, if possible, the Strait of Anian; but as his examination began about thirty miles south of the proper latitude, the quest at Cape Mendocino was abandoned. In steering for San Francisco Bay, then well-known, the *Sonora* entered a smaller bay to the north, to which Bodega gave his own name. This is the bay in which Sir Francis Drake is supposed to have refitted, and at the present time is known as Drake's Bay. Four years later, Arteaga and Quadra, accompanied by the faithful Maurelle, made still another voyage of discovery, sighting Mount St. Elias, previously known to the Russians, and entering Prince William's Sound.

This was the third and final voyage of the Spaniards in carrying out the policy inaugurated

under Galvez. Until nine years later, or the year 1788, no further attempt was made to extend the power of Spain to the northward. In the interval events of the utmost importance had taken place, events which were ultimately to loosen forever her hold upon North America. Another and a more aggressive nation had learned of the wealth of this coast. When, in the year named, the Spaniards sought once more to assert their claim, the seeds had been planted for a controversy that brought them to the verge of war and all but set aflame a general European conflict.

That other and more aggressive nation was, of course, Great Britain. Since the days when Sir Francis Drake had swept like a hurricane along the coast of South America, laying, perhaps unwittingly, in these and other exploits, the foundation of the naval supremacy of his country, England had risen from a fourth or fifth rate power, with little territory, limited population and resources, and a small and irregular army, to the first rank among the powers of Europe. The triumph was almost wholly one of commerce. After the defeat of the Armada, trade had based itself upon the naval prowess of England and had thrust her steadily forward. By the end of the seventeenth century she had eclipsed her greatest rival of commerce on the high seas—the Dutch. So, too, in the eighteenth century, the trading class of Great Britain was the

first to recognize the importance of the Pacific. The time was opportune. England was herself firmly established on the Atlantic coast. France was no longer a power in America; the Revolution and Napoleon were as yet hidden in the political future. Spain's recent endeavour to retain her grasp on the Pacific and to justify her claims to exclusive rights in its waters was but the final effort of an expiring influence. Russia, a more to be dreaded antagonist, had already fortified herself in the extreme north-west and was known to have extended to the New World her traditional policy of encroachment. Having conquered Siberia and established a trade with the natives of the Alaskan archipelago, there had been created a series of vested rights, more embarrassing to Great Britain at this juncture than all the plans of France and Spain combined. England, therefore, was alive to her interests when she decided to send expeditions at this time to delimit the shore line of the continent. But the impelling motive was commercial—to discover the passage, supposed, somewhere between the 40th and 60th parallels, to lead to the Atlantic. The key to the oriental trade, more important even than the New World itself, was thus the objective of the intrepid Cook and Vancouver, and the fact is eminently characteristic of British policy. It was left, too, in the end, to the enterprise of commerce—to the North West Company and the Hudson's Bay Company—to con-

serve for England her splendid domain in Western America. The French Revolution and the ambition of Napoleon withdrew her energies, at a critical moment, for the defence of her own shores and the preservation of Europe ; and these far off lands, at that time as little known in the United States as in the Old World itself, were left largely to work out their own destinies.

The era of exploration that dawned with the appearance of the British trader in these waters, was included within the closing quarter of the eighteenth century. It was the final and, in many respects, the most brilliant in the history of discovery in the Pacific. Great Britain played the leading rôle, but Russia, France and Spain were only less active. The United States also plunged with all the ardour of young nationhood into the quest of glory over seas. With the eager spirit which had animated the earlier centuries of discovery, the unexplored remainder of America was now made known to geographers, and the outlines of the continent charted with approximate accuracy. The advantages of Great Britain lay in the superiority of her methods of navigation, the ability of her seamen, the strength of her commercial fleet and her worldwide trade, whereby she was able to utilize immediately and to the fullest extent the wealth of her discoveries. Thus it happened that of all the nations her efforts were the most persistent and her work the most pains-

taking and exact, and it was mainly through her navigators that the world was finally enlightened as to the character of the north-west coast. Spain and Russia, though they sent out many expeditions, added, in comparison, but little of value. The Spaniards, in particular, pursued a policy of secrecy which robbed them of much credit. But the inferiority of their mathematical instruments would still have left them handicapped in the race with Great Britain. The work of Cook and Vancouver demanded qualities of skill, as well as of courage and endurance, that are not often duplicated in a single generation.

It is well to repeat, in connection with the voyages of these two great commanders, that their primary object was to survey the north-west coast line, within specified parallels of latitude, and to discover whether any opening existed such as might lead to the Atlantic Ocean by the supposititious North-west Passage, for the discovery of which a reward of twenty thousand pounds was offered by the British admiralty. The latitude of the opening, whose discovery was attributed to Juan de Fuca, was between the 47th and 48th parallels. There was also the reputed strait of Admiral de Fonte, another mythical explorer of the seventeenth century, near the 53rd parallel. The famous river of Oregon, of which Jonathan Carver had heard rumours, might even connect by some mysterious channel with the waters of the long sought Strait

of Anian. It is not the first instance in history in which a chimera, having seized the popular imagination, paved the way for results more important than were claimed for the original fancy.

In 1778, the famous navigator, Captain James Cook, arrived on the north-west coast of America. He had two ships, the *Resolution* and the *Discovery*, and his instructions from the British government were to examine the coast line from about 45° north latitude to the Arctic Ocean, and to ascertain whether any large rivers, inlets or arms of the sea extended to the eastward. Cook first sighted the coast in latitude 44° north; but, having been blown off shore by bad weather, the strait of Juan de Fuca escaped his observation. Land was next seen in the vicinity of a large sound, latitude 49° 30′ north, in which Cook anchored, March 29th, 1778. After a few weeks spent in refitting his vessels and refreshing their crews, he continued on his northward voyage, his men having obtained a valuable quantity of furs during their stay. Cook named the bay in which he had passed this interval King George's Sound; but understanding afterwards that it was called Nootka[1] by the natives, it was re-named, and has ever since been known as Nootka Sound. It was Cook's intention, on leaving Nootka, to proceed as speedily as possible to the part of the coast lying under the 65th parallel of lati-

[1] See Appendix "A"

tude; the violence of the weather, however, again prevented him from approaching the land for some days, and he was forced to leave unvisited the region near the 53rd parallel where geographers had placed the strait of Fonte. Cook doubted its existence and recorded in his log book: Saw nothing like it; nor is there the least possibility that any such thing ever existed. After discovering and naming the two large bays known as Prince William's Sound and Cook Inlet, and having stayed a short time at Unalaska, Cook proceeded to the Arctic Ocean, passing through the strait which he named Bering in honour of the Danish navigator who had first discovered it. Turning about, he set sail for the Sandwich Islands, where he was killed, February 14th, 1779. The ships then returned to England. It was the report of these crews respecting the boundless wealth in furs—to be had almost for the asking on this coast—that aroused the European nations to action, and incited them, on Cook's narrative being given to the world in 1784, to plan still further expeditions and discoveries.

Had an independent state arisen in that early time on the north-west coast, it might fittingly have chosen the sea-otter as its emblem. To the early navigators of the North Pacific the sea-otter offered the same lure of fortune as the gold and silver of Peru to the soldiers of Spain. The tales of the dangers of the chase and of the enormous profits

read like romance. So eager and relentless was the trade that the sea-otter was already rare when British Columbia placed the wapiti and the mountain sheep on its escutcheon ; it has now all but vanished, leaving no trace of the time when it played so important a part in the history of the region. With its discovery by Cook a new era begins in the story of maritime adventure in the Pacific.

The earliest expedition having the trade in otter primarily in view was made by James Hanna, an Englishman, in the year 1785. The voyage was eminently successful. Otter skins were purchased from the natives for trinkets, and sold at enormously enhanced prices in China, then the world's market for furs. About the same time, Guise, Meares and Tipping came from England on a similar errand. Meares spent the winter of 1786-7 in Prince William's Sound, where more than half his crew died of scurvy. Portlock and Dixon, fur traders sailing from London in 1785, made the discovery of the separation of the Queen Charlotte group from the mainland. The discovery was confirmed in 1788 by Duncan, who, with Colnett, arrived on the coast prior to the departure of Portlock and Dixon. This and the numerous openings found in the shore-line, all presumably channels extending far to the eastward, led to the supposition that the entire north-western portion of the American continent might be a vast collection of islands, and

the story of the mythical de Fonte's voyage again began to gain credit. Barkley, an Englishman, in command of the *Imperial Eagle*, a trader for furs under the flag of the Austrian East India Company, discovered a wide strait at the south of Vancouver Island and charted it under the name Juan de Fuca in honour of the legendary original discoverer.[1] After the sale of the *Imperial Eagle* in the East Indies in 1788, Barkley made a second voyage to the north-west coast in the brig *Halcyon*. He was accompanied on both voyages by his wife, the first white woman, so far as known, to visit these shores.

With the separation of the American colonies from Great Britain, a new element was introduced into this growing commerce of the Pacific. The moment the bond was broken, every skipper in New England seemed to turn his thoughts seaward. Great Britain being occupied in Europe and her powerful competition therefore withdrawn, the American ships were free to carry the new flag wherever the ambition of trade might lead. And it led far. Unrestrained, its sailors swept southward to Cuba, to South America, and around Cape Horn. In the year 1787, they made their first voyage to the Pacific and the north-west coast, the ship *Columbia* under Kendrick, and the sloop *Lady Washington*, under Gray of Boston, doubling Cape Horn together. The *Lady Washington* ar-

[1] See appendix "B"

rived at Nootka on the 17th September, 1788, and remained there with her consort during the whole of the following winter. They were still in Nootka Sound in 1789. The *Columbia*, now by an exchange of commanders, under Gray, returned to Boston by way of China, arriving in August, 1790, when she was received amid great rejoicings, medals being struck in honour of the ship that had first carried the flag of the United States almost fifty thousand miles around the world. Meanwhile the *Lady Washington*, under Kendrick, remained in Nootka Sound. In six weeks Gray had refitted and had started again for the Pacific. During this voyage he was destined to prove the truth of Heceta's great discovery, when, on May 11th, 1792, he entered the mouth of the Columbia River. On leaving the river on May 20th, he gave it the name of his ship. The honour of the discovery has been claimed by the Spaniards, and for Broughton, the lieutenant of Vancouver, who subsequently entered the river and sailed a hundred miles against its current in the armed brig *Chatham;* but it undoubtedly belongs to Heceta. This has been a much debated question, and Gray's visit to the Columbia played an important part in the Oregon question. However, Heceta was the discoverer of the river and Broughton the first authorized explorer to navigate its waters.

For Kendrick, the comrade of Gray, has been claimed the credit of re-discovering the strait of Juan de Fuca, though the matter is one of controversy. Metcalfe, a citizen of the United States, visited Nootka in 1789; and Ingraham explored the coast of the Queen Charlotte Islands in 1791 in the brig *Hope*. The latter left a very important description of the geography and natural history of the islands, and of the language, manners and customs of the natives. With the exception, however, of the entering of the Columbia by Gray, the passage of the strait of Juan de Fuca by Kendrick, and the cruise of the *Hope*, nothing of special importance was achieved by American enterprise at that period.

The north-west coast about this period attracted the attention of other nations than Great Britain and the United States. La Pérouse, a distinguished naval officer of France, who had captured Prince of Wales fort on Hudson Bay from Samuel Hearne in 1782, spent three months in 1788, under orders from his government, between the 52nd and 54th parallels, making a scientific examination of the coast. He was followed in 1791 by Etienne Marchand, who, in a merchant ship, followed much the same course, leaving an account of his voyage in three volumes. Malaspina, from whom the strait of that name is called, in the same year endeavoured, with two Spanish ships, to determine in more

northern latitudes the existence of the Strait of Anian. Important also in this connection was the attempt of Elisa, in the summer of 1790, to explore the strait of Juan de Fuca, his lieutenant, Quimper, examining both shores for a distance of one hundred miles, but being unable, for lack of time, to follow the many channels and inlets the general direction of which was noted. Many Spanish names were given; few of them have survived. The Spaniards undertook a permanent establishment at Friendly Cove, Nootka, in 1790; and in 1792 endeavoured to form a settlement at Neah Bay, near Cape Flattery. From the former basis, Elisa, its commandant, sent Fidalgo, his lieutenant, to examine the coast to the northward occupied by the Russians, and to enquire into the nature of their operations. He acquired but little geographical information of value. One of the Russian ships reported by him was that which, in command of Joseph Billings, in 1790, visited Unalaska, Kodiak and Prince William's Sound.

A voyage of the British captain, Meares, in 1788, which is a part of this fur-trading chronicle, owes its importance, not to any achievement of the expedition itself, but to the diplomatic results which it was the means, sometime later, of bringing about. War with Spain was, for a short season, imminent, and the termination of the "Nootka Affair," which had its origin in Meares's operations at Friendly Cove, gave to Britain specific rights in

PRINCE OF WALES FORT, HUDSON BAY, 1777

Drawn by Samuel Hearne. From an engraving in the John Ross Robertson collection

an important territory, though the terms of the settlement itself, as will be seen, opened the door to a further series of controversies which were not finally laid at rest until the fixing of the Oregon boundary in 1846. In the year 1788 Meares was at Canton, China, engaged, with the assistance of some English merchants, in fitting out an expedition of two vessels for the American trade,—the *Felice* and the *Iphigenia Nubiana*, commanded by himself and Captain William Douglas respectively. The ships, though British property and navigated by British subjects, sailed under the Portuguese flag, and were ostensibly owned by Don Cavallo & Co., of Macao, the object being to escape the heavy port charges levied by the Chinese authorities on the goods of nations other than the Portuguese. On February 12th, the *Iphigenia* sailed for Cook's River, and the *Felice* for Nootka Sound, the latter arriving on May 15th. The most notable native chiefs of Nootka at that time were Maquinna and Callicum, with whom Meares cultivated friendly relations, and by whom, and by the natives generally, he was warmly welcomed. It was Meares's purpose to establish at this point a post which might become the basis of the fur trade of the future. With this in view, he purchased from Maquinna a tract of land on the shore of Friendly Cove for which he paid some eight or ten sheets of copper and other articles. Here he erected a substantial structure surrounded with breastworks and

armed with one cannon. The British flag was hoisted and for the first time waved above a formal British possession on this coast. At Nootka, Meares also built the first ship launched in what is now British Columbia—the *North-west America*. Later he explored the coast southward, narrowly missing the mouth of the Columbia, and on his return entered and examined the strait of Juan de Fuca for some distance, taking possession of it in the name of Great Britain. His ship, after again reaching Friendly Cove, was joined by her consort the *Iphigenia* from Cook River, with a large cargo of sea-otter. Later Meares sailed for China with the furs, while the *Iphigenia* and the *North-west America* repaired to the Sandwich Islands.

The succeeding events which enter into the famous Nootka affair are too intricate to be more than mentioned here. Douglas, with the *Iphigenia* and the *North-west America* returned to Nootka in the following year for the purpose of continuing the fur trade. Thereupon both vessels were seized by a Spanish ship of war commanded by Martinez, who was under orders to assert the sovereignty of the king of Spain throughout the Pacific Ocean. Nootka, which the Spanish called Port San Lorenzo, was claimed by Martinez, by right of discovery. Douglas, however, was able to show from a chart of the voyage of the *Santiago* in 1775 that Cook, and not the Spaniard, was the discoverer of Nootka Sound. The *Iphigenia* was thereupon

released by Martinez, and the greater part of his stores returned to Douglas, with the warning, however, that he was to trade no more on that coast. Douglas subsequently sailed to the Queen Charlotte Islands and thence to China. Soon after, the British ships *Princess Royal* and *Argonaut*, sent from Macao by the Associated Companies to trade on the north-west coast, were seized in like manner, and, with the *North-west America* were pressed into the service of Spain. The crew of the *North-west America* was sent to China on the American ship *Columbia* then in those waters; but the crews of the two other ships were deported to San Blas, where they were treated with cruelty. Nootka was taken formal possession of and was occupied by Spain until 1795.

The dispute which immediately arose between the governments of Great Britain and Spain forms one of the most important chapters in the history of the north-west coast. Not only a matter of moment in itself, it was the basis for most of the controversy that followed over the possession of this territory. Spain, as we have seen, still claimed the exclusive right to the western seas. All foreign vessels found without license in these waters were regarded as enemies, even though belonging to a nation at peace with the king. No other country, moreover, was held to have rights in any territory to reach which it was necessary to pass around Cape Horn or through the Straits of Magellan.

Such were the fancies still nursed by Spain in the eighteenth century. It was doubtless the final consciousness that the encroachments of other nations on her traditional sphere of influence would effectively overthrow all semblance of her right to exclusive sovereignty that induced Spain now to make a final attempt to confirm her original claim. Whatever may be said of the undoubted priority of Spanish enterprise in the Pacific, England had been more active in the exploration of the north-west portion of it, and had inaugurated, and now enjoyed, the greater part of the trade in that part of the world. Without other grounds of sovereignty than the papal concession of three hundred years before, which embraced half the area of the world and included a continent which was not then known to exist, Spain's case, on the threshold of the nineteenth century, and within sixty years of the freedom of Italy, stood on a tottering basis.

When the news of the seizures reached England, a vigorous protest was immediately lodged with the Spanish government. Pitt, then at the zenith of his power, united a profound knowledge of Spanish decrepitude with a wholesome belief in the ability of Great Britain to defend her own interests. The Spanish government, more skilled in the arts of intrigue than of statesmanship, and seeking at first to evade the issue, was met with a demonstration in force. The principle that "British sub-

jects have an indisputable right to the enjoyment of a free and uninterrupted navigation, commerce and fishery, and to the possession of such establishments as they should form, with the consent of the natives of the country, and not occupied by any other European nation," was enunciated with emphasis. Spain, whose power had rapidly declined, could not risk a war with England. After repeated conferences, she agreed to restore the seized vessels, to indemnify the owners for their losses, and to give satisfaction to the dignity of the British Crown. It was understood at the same time that the Spanish declaration "was not to preclude or prejudice the ulterior discussion of any right which His Catholic Majesty might claim to form an exclusive establishment at Nootka Sound." The amount of indemnity was fixed by a commission at $210,000. This was handed over to the owners of the property seized, and Nootka and the adjoining territory were restored to the British Crown.[1]

Into the final settlement a number of considerations entered which deprived Great Britain of much of the strength of her position. Pitt was undoubtedly determined, in the event of war, to strike a blow at the Spanish Empire in America. Spain, however, by the terms of the Family Compact, had the ear of France. The times were not happy for England. The French Revolution was already brewing; Europe was arming; and a series

[1] See appendix "C"

of continental alliances left Great Britain isolated. With a diminished credit, the government leaned towards a peaceful solution of the difficulty; and apart from the restitution of property and the reparation made for losses and acts of violence, the treaty left the situation on the north-west coast to all intents unaltered. In parliament it was vigorously attacked as a capitulation to Spain. Fox pointed out that it enlarged the area of dispute, and predicted a renewal of the difficulty. In this, time proved Fox right. The prestige of the country, however, had been vindicated; and the government, with a large majority at its back, was glad to be rid of an embarrassing situation. In the light of history it may be regretted that motives of temporary expediency, in this as in other instances, should have dictated the policy of Great Britain with regard to her interests in America. There were at that period only two other claimants to the Pacific coast, Spain and Russia. It was generally conceded that the latter had no rights south of the 60th parallel, while the former had established no title to the coast north of the 38th parallel which was superior to that of Great Britain. A decisive stroke might have secured the states of Washington, Oregon and a large portion of California, for all time to come.

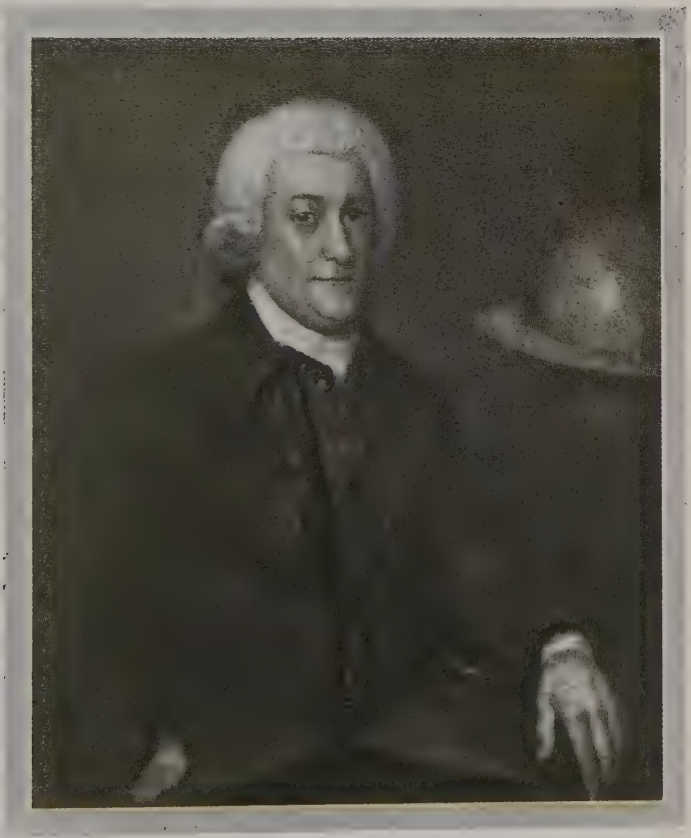
Pursuant to the terms of the Nootka convention, commissioners were appointed by the governments of Spain and Great Britain to effect the

formal act of restitution. The men selected were George Vancouver, and one whose intrepidity has been already witnessed, Bodega y Quadra. Worthier representatives of the two great powers, it would have been impossible to choose. Steadfast as they both were in enforcing the claims of their sovereigns, and zealous to the last degree for the rights of their respective countries, each, nevertheless, could recognize in the other high courage, splendid ability and true greatness of character. While honour forbade compromise, they nevertheless became firm friends and to the last maintained the highest admiration for each other. Their names will forever remain associated as two of the greatest in the history of the north-west coast.

Though the commissioners had explicit instructions from their governments as to the manner in which Nootka should be handed over, they interpreted their orders in a widely different spirit. Quadra maintained that restitution was required only of the buildings and lands that had been occupied by British subjects; and as, from due inquiry, he could find no evidence of such occupation, he argued that there was nothing to be paid for by Spain. Vancouver, on the other hand, held that, under the terms of the convention, Great Britain was entitled to the possession of the whole of the territory surrounding Nootka and Clayoquot. Widely divergent evidence was offered in support of the opposing claims. The immediate

result was that the commissioners, unable to come to a satisfactory understanding, referred the dispute back to their respective governments, Nootka remaining in the interval under the Spanish flag.

Vancouver with his two ships, the *Discovery* commanded by himself, and the brig *Chatham*, under Broughton, who had previously surveyed the coast from Cape Mendocino northward, now proceeded to the second and most important part of his commission—the thorough exploration of the whole north-west shore line. The aim, as ever, was to solve the problem of the north-west passage; it was also to establish England's claim to the coast between New Spain on the south, and Russian America on the north. The work of Vancouver and his lieutenants in this connection was so minute as to be final. The summers of 1792, 1793 and 1794 were spent on the coast, and the observations included every bay, cape and channel from San Francisco to Bering Sea. The winters were passed at the Sandwich Islands. On his untiring energy success attended from first to last, and his work remains the most extensive nautical survey ever completed in one expedition. To Vancouver, accordingly, we owe in large measure the nomenclature of the North Pacific coast. In the names which he chose many were of persons distinguished in the official life of his day; many were of humble members of his crew



GEORGE VANCOUVER

From the original painting in the National Portrait Gallery

Vancouver sailed, for the last time, from the north-west coast on October 16th, 1794. On Christmas Day of that year, being still at sea, he finds it of interest to record that the crew did not fail to drink in silence to the memory of Quadra, who had died some time before. He was to be followed soon by Vancouver himself. The friendship of the two men was cemented by the name given by Vancouver to the great island of the mid-Pacific coast, for long afterwards known as "Quadra and Vancouver Island." In the efflux of time, the Spaniards having abandoned the coast altogether, the name Quadra was dropped and the temporary triumph at Nootka was thus avenged at the expense of one of the most noble of his race. In the settlement of the Nootka affair also, Vancouver's view in the end prevailed, and on the morning of March 28th, 1795, Lieutenant Pierce and Brigadier-General Alava, representing respectively the governments of England and Spain, completed the act of restitution, and the British flag was hoisted, never again to be hauled down.

When Vancouver was at Point Gray, in the Gulf of Georgia, near the site of the present city of Vancouver, he fell in with two Spanish vessels of war, the *Sutil* and the *Mexicana*, commanded respectively by Lieutenants Galiano and Valdez. They were small and badly equipped, and they were the last sent by Spain into the North Atlantic Ocean for purposes of discovery. The

expedition has this distinction, however, that it is the only one, since that of Vizcaino, of which an adequate account has been given to the world with the sanction of the Spanish government. The journal of Galiano and Valdez was published at Madrid in 1802, by order of the king, with an introduction which included an historical sketch of the earlier voyages of the Spaniards on the coasts of America north of Mexico. The introduction is now, naturally, the most valuable part of the work. Notwithstanding its activity for a time, Spanish exploration had resulted in nothing. No colonies were established; no trade was built up; no territory was acquired. A few names dotting the maps of the coast—Haro, Valdez, Texada, San Juan, and the like—are all that remain to show the once all-powerful influence of Spain. The majority even of these have been replaced by the names given by English navigators, particularly those of Vancouver, and are known to-day only to the map-maker and the student of early coast history.

It may be added that Great Britain herself, for a long time after the date of the Nootka Treaty, ceased to take further interest in the territory which it affected. The victory, in fact, was one of diplomacy alone. For many years a thousand miles of the Pacific coast was in reality a "no man's land," and it is in no sense due to the prescience of the statesmen of the early nineteenth century that

it is British territory to-day. We must remember, of course, in mitigation of the indifference felt by Great Britain as to its future, the circumstances and conditions of the times, the remoteness of the region and the almost total lack of knowledge concerning it. It was the fur trade, not the nation, which pushed its way overland into this western empire, and carried with it the supremacy of the British flag and the authority of British law.

Several terrible encounters with the Indians occurred when the trade was at its height. In 1803, the American ship *Boston* was destroyed by the natives of Nootka Sound, all the crew being murdered, with the exception of the armourer and the sailmaker who were kept in slavery for four years by that chief Maquinna who figured so prominently in Vancouver's and Quadra's day. In 1805, the *Atahualpa*, of Rhode Island, was attacked by the savages of Millbank Sound, and her captain, mate and six seamen killed, after which the sailors succeeded in repelling the assailants and saving the vessel. In the same manner the *Tonquin* of Boston, the first vessel of the Astorians, was in June, 1811, attacked by the natives while at anchor in Clayoquot Sound and the entire crew massacred.

We may turn now to the other great power that had entrenched itself, even more securely than

Great Britain, on the north-western coast, a power that has menaced at more points than one the advance of the British Empire. In 1788 Haro, on the return of a Spanish expedition from Alaska, wrote to San Blas that he had found Russian establishments between the 59th and 60th parallels. The results of that occupation were still alive in the Bering Sea and Alaska boundary disputes of the present generation.

In Siberia, as in the northern part of the American continent, the stimulus to early adventure and exploration had come from the fur trade. By the middle of the seventeenth century the Russians had pushed their way into that vast and desolate territory, and, early in the eighteenth, had completed the conquest of the whole of northern Asia. Rich in furs of all kinds, the newly acquired possession afforded a fruitful field for exploitation, the more so on account of its proximity to the markets of China, with which trade relations were speedily established. Communication was provided by means of caravans, a system somewhat analogous to the brigades of the Hudson's Bay Company. But in trade it is what lies just beyond that lures. Expeditions from the northern rivers of Siberia had by 1648 found their way around the north-eastern extremity of Asia into Bering Strait, and at least one vessel was driven by storm in that year upon the coast of Kamtchatka. After repeated adventures of this kind and the establishment of inter-

course with the natives of this far-off region, Kamtchatka was definitely included in the territory of the traders. But accounts were now brought back of still another continent looming beyond the islands of these northern seas. Was it America? Or was it a new land altogether—wedged in between the eastern shores of Asia and the western limits of America? Peter the Great, his ambition unappeased by the subjugation of Siberia, resolved to emulate the conquests of his European rivals in the New World. To this end he equipped an expedition under Vitus Bering, a Dane attracted to the Russian service, whose heroic career received scant justice from his own age. Sailing from Kamtchatka in 1728, Bering passed through the strait which separates Asia from America and satisfied himself on the then disputed point whether the continents were two or one. In that and the following year, however, he did little to determine the relative position of the new land.

It is unnecessary, for the present purpose, to detail the various stages by which the conclusions of Bering's first voyage were confirmed and amplified. A later expedition, under the same unflinching captain, set out after an interval of three years, and was prolonged until his death. It succeeded in reaching the 53rd parallel of latitude, discovering the Shumagin Islands and the aborigines. The latter were, in the main, like those of Northern Asia, and though they had never seen white men

before, they had knives and other articles of iron and copper, which it was supposed they had obtained through trade with the Siberian natives. Bering's final expedition was one of terrible hardships. He was by this time old and imbecile. Worn by sickness and anxiety, he died, on November 28th, 1741, on an island on which his ship had been driven by stress of weather. The island was afterwards named in his honour, as well as the great northern sea and strait in which so much of his activity had been displayed. With Bering were associated Chirikoff, scarcely less unfortunate, and the naturalist Groyers, who also lost his life.

The last voyage of Bering had one very important result: it laid the foundations of the trade in furs between Russia and the American continent. In the privations of the expedition, provisions failed, and the crew were forced to subsist for a time on the flesh of sea-otter—"sea beaver" as they were called by the Russians—which they hunted and killed. The skins were preserved, and on the return of the ships brought extravagant prices from the Chinese merchants. News of this character was not long in reaching the ears of the Siberian traders. From this chance beginning, a series of private expeditions were soon racing each other across the Pacific with the object of the new trade in otter. They were continued in ever-increasing numbers over a period of a quarter of a century or more. Incidentally they added much to the knowledge

of the islands between Kamtchatka and America.

In all the long annals of commercial enterprise, lawful and unrighteous, the traffic of these Russian adventurers has been surpassed in horrors by one and one only—the African slave trade. The vessels were small, many of them built of green planks lashed with deer sinew or thongs of walrus hide to the timbers, and caulked with moss. The traders themselves, known to the Russians as Promishleniks, were the riff-raff of Siberia, criminals often, though sometimes of noble, even of royal, lineage, amenable only to passion and the law of greed. Being nearly all landsmen, they sailed usually by dead reckoning alone. It is not surprising that numbers of their crazy craft were annually cast away. The crews were the victims of unheard-of cruelties, as well as suffering every conceivable hardship from cold, starvation and disease. In addition, they were attacked and murdered on every available opportunity by the natives, in revenge for the enforcement of levies, the debauching of their women, and the slaughter and enslavement of their men by the traders,—ending in a state of open war that twice wiped Russian settlement from the coast of America. Yet, prompted as were these expeditions by lust and avarice, accompanied by many of the most revolting atrocities that ever disgraced the name of humanity, it is impossible to withhold a tribute of admiration for the energy

with which voyage after voyage was made, or for the courage, stubborn as it was reckless, displayed by the traders amidst their appalling difficulties. As a matter of fact, the outrages of the place and period were not confined to the Promishleniks, but characterized the whole Russian administration. They were contrary to the express instructions of the government; but, as the Russian proverb said: "God was high in the Heavens, and the Czar was far away."

The immediate successor of Peter the Great continued the policy of expansion begun by that sovereign. Synd, Krenitzin and Levaschef commanded explorations to America between 1764 and 1769. The first cargo of furs to enter Canton by ship was carried by a party of Polish exiles who escaped from Kamtchatka, and under the Polish flag cruised through Bering Sea and among the Aleutian Islands. The story of this desperate venture is in itself material for a romance. No expeditions of note followed for some years afterwards. Up to the time of Cook, notwithstanding the number of Russian vessels that had been in Alaskan waters, no exact geographical knowledge had been gained respecting that portion of the coast, and the errors in recorded latitudes and longitudes were sometimes very great.

In 1781, Ivan Golikoff, the celebrated Gregory Skelikoff, and other Russian fur merchants, organized themselves into a formal trading associa-

tion. There was need enough for organization of some sort. Four years after Bering's discovery of the sea-otter, seventy-seven Russian concerns were hunting in the islands of Alaska. This was the beginning of the Alaskan fur monopoly, later to become of international importance. A rival company was formed in 1797, but was soon after absorbed into what was known as the Skelikoff United Trading Company. Still another company was projected in the following year. In 1799, however, the Emperor Paul took all the rival traders under his protection, consolidated their interests, and granted them a charter for twenty years as the Russian American Company, with sole control over the coasts of America north of the 55th parallel of latitude. Their obligations were: to organize settlements; to promote agriculture, trade and discovery; to propagate the Greek Catholic faith; and, without interfering with the rights of other nations, to extend the influence and sovereignty of Russia in the Pacific. The capital was fixed at ninety-eight thousand silver roubles.

Without going into details as to this highly organized company which, in the nature and extent of its powers and in the vastness of the territory over which it ruled, resembled the Hudson's Bay Company, it may be stated that its sway was virtually absolute in the country, even to the life of the inhabitants. All persons and property were under the control of the chief director,

who lived in Kadiak, and from whom there was no appeal except to a board of governors far away at Irkutsk. Its regulations were in general just and humane; but their enforcement was entrusted to men with whom justice and humanity were subservient always to interest and expediency, and sometimes to baser passions. Baranoff, one of the most picturesque figures of his time, ruling for twenty years like a despot over the colonies from his castle overlooking the village of Sitka, may be taken as the outstanding type of the local Russian governor, iron-hearted, iron-framed, bold, shrewd, unscrupulous, alternating days of toil with nights of revel on raw and fiery *vodka*, a Peter the Great in miniature among vagabonds and adventurers.

It was part of the policy of Russia, in pursuance of a method already traditional, to establish her power in America to the exclusion of all other nations north of the Spanish zone. To this end, during the régime of Baranoff, Von Resanoff was dispatched to plant Russian colonies at the mouth of the Columbia and on the Californian coast. In this he failed. Searching for the estuary of the Columbia,—at the very time, it may be noted, that Lewis and Clark, the pioneers of discovery overland from the United States, were leaving their winter quarters at Clatsop,—he either missed it altogether or was unable to cross the bar, and so passed on to California. Later, however, in 1812, a

Russian colony was established on Bodega Bay by Kuskoff, and was known for many years as the Ross, that is, the Russian, settlement. It continued with varying fortunes until 1841, when it was purchased by the American trader, Sutter, for $30,000. These operations are of importance in the light of the claim later advanced that the Russian American Company controlled the whole Pacific coast of America and adjacent islands, from Bering Strait to the mouth of the Columbia. That famous company, it may be added, maintained its existence through a long and chequered career, renewing its charter from time to time until 1861, when it fell into decay and was not again revived.

A word may be added in completion of this hasty outline. Baranoff died in 1819, broken-hearted by his recall. Thereafter, a more enlightened and humane policy was introduced, and many of the old abuses were removed or abated. Baron Wrangell, who had followed Baranoff as director-general, was succeeded in 1836 by Kuprianoff. In 1840, Adolphus Etoline, a young admiral of noble birth, became governor. The splendour of his rule was in startling contrast with the ways of Baranoff, who lived in Spartan simplicity and ruled without ruffles. In still greater contrast was the luxury of Etoline's castle with the squalor of the village surrounding it. It was Etoline whom Douglas visited as an officer of the Hudson's Bay

Company in 1842, in connection with affairs of business between the two companies.

During the period of Russian occupation, and especially between the date of Cook's voyage and the beginning of the nineteenth century, continuous activity was displayed in the exploration of the north-west coast, with more particular reference to the portion now included in Alaska. In addition to the voyages already mentioned, many expeditions of note were undertaken both on private and official initiative. Those of Lastochkin and Pribyloff in 1787; of Ismyloff, Bechareff, and Delareff in 1788; of Joseph Billings and Martin Sauer in 1769 and 1791; of Khwostoff and Davidoff in 1802; of Krusenstern and Lisiansky in 1803 and subsequent years; of Kiskoff in 1808; of Kotzebue in 1816 and 1823; of Baron Wrangell and Etoline in 1820 and 1822; are worthy of special mention. The most important of all, no doubt, were the explorations of Krusenstern and Lisiansky, of which a full account is given in the journal of Krusenstern himself, a mine of information on all points relating to Russian enterprise on the North Pacific coast.

The story of Russia in North America is singularly sordid and unattractive where it is not merely terrible. The stern Alaskan coast has its intervals of warmth and sunshine; but there is no time in the period of Russian sovereignty that is not gloomy and forbidding, overcast with heavy clouds of human suffering and despair.

THE PASSING OF THE NAVIGATOR

In the foregoing pages it has been sought to trace, in outline, the salient features of that long and stirring period during which the coast line of America, stretching for twelve thousand miles from Cape Horn to Behring Sea, became known—at what a price of sacrifice and endeavour!—to human enterprise. The story of the period, it was seen, divided itself naturally into three parts, corresponding in the main with the activities of three great nations,—Spain, Russia and Great Britain. We may include the last even here, because, while her occupation of the middle coast was never until later times as definite as that of her rivals in the north and south, she was finally, after a long interval of diplomacy, to establish herself permanently within her sphere, while the others have vanished from the continent. With Vancouver, the era of maritime discovery came to an end. Thenceforward the field of the explorer was shifted to the Arctic Ocean, where his continued activity is of interest as showing the tenacity with which the British clung to the idea of a north-west passage. Merchant vessels from the United States and other countries continued meanwhile to come and go at intervals. With the establishment of the Hudson's Bay Company at Fort Vancouver in 1824 a regular trade with England, by way of Cape Horn, sprang up. The date of the *Beaver*, the first steamship in the Pacific, was 1835. The coastwise trade developed later, until, within a few years, as the Pacific

became more and more the meeting place of East and West, the merchant marine employed in its service had multiplied into a powerful fleet. We have now, however, to turn from the tale of seafaring trade and adventure to the pioneers of travel overland, to the scouts and convoys of the fur-traders who, by sled, pack-horse, ox-cart and canoe, opened up, over a net-work of trails and great rivers as perilous as the ocean itself, a way of communication across the plains and mountains of the west and on to the Pacific.

CHAPTER II

THE TRAVELLER OVERLAND

IN the record of coastwise exploration, of which a brief account was given in the preceding chapter, it will have been noted that the explorers, if they landed at all, did not ordinarily venture beyond gunshot of the waters whereon their vessels rode, and that the information they brought back related entirely to the configuration of the shore or to the animal life which teemed in the adjacent seas. The traveller overland was scarcely possible until the sailor had supplied him with a sure objective; but his advent, when at last he came, had a more immediate significance for the country. He came as the forerunner of the trade that had already opened up the whole of the interior continent and that is notable in history for the fierce rivalry with which it sought new worlds to conquer. With the first dip of his paddle in the tumultuous upper waters of the western slope, the hour of civilization for that mighty region may be said to have struck; while with the firm establishment of the fur trade as the dominant local influence we are come at once to a period from which conditions began—tentatively at first, but in accordance with a definite process—to take on the form which was destined to be final. The sailor showed the

way, but it was the overland traveller who entered in and took possession.

There is a wealth of material bearing on this important epoch in the settlement of the continent. The Pacific slope, no less than the border lands of Canada and New England, was the meeting place of many an old-time jealousy ; and many political currents of the great world sent their waves into that distant territory. Europe and the new-born republic lay behind—the immediate fountains of energy; before, was all the glamour of the ancient East, to which, even yet, America could be thought of as a stepping-stone. But our concern must first be with the men whose unconquerable will and daring were needed before any nation could lay claim to the land—with the traveller and the trader who were the first to scale the mighty barrier of the mountains and to penetrate the fertile valleys that lay beyond.

It is a singular tribute to tenacity of purpose (the wish being father to the thought) that the search for the North-West Passage furnished a motive hardly less powerful for the earliest expeditions overland than for those that had been undertaken by sea. The firm belief in the existence of an ice-free channel did not end with the conclusive voyages of Cook and Vancouver. In England especially, when almost every other nation had abandoned the pursuit, a stubborn confidence remained. From Frobisher and Davis, in the

sixteenth century, through Hall, Hudson, Button, Baffin, Munk, Foxe and James in the seventeenth, to Ross, Parry Austin, Franklin, McClintock and the Franklin relief expeditions in the nineteenth, the tradition on the Atlantic seaboard had been handed on. But, long before the navigator gave over the quest, other agencies had been invoked. One of the most frequent complaints against the Hudson's Bay Company in the eighteenth century was that it had done little to develop the land acquired by its charter, and, especially, that it had made no serious effort to find a shorter route to the Pacific. Hence the expeditions of Hearne, Rae, and Simpson, on behalf of the company, and the discovery of the Coppermine River in 1769. With a shifting of the scene and leading actors, the historic voyage of Alexander Mackenzie of the North West Company to the mouth of the river bearing his name, and his expedition later to the Pacific—were rich beyond measure in ultimate results for his country and for humanity.

It is necessary now to turn to the phase in the development of the Pacific coast which more than all others influenced its political destiny. And here it will be well to define somewhat the relative positions of Great Britain and the United States with respect to the sovereignty of the western continent at the end of the eighteenth century. Up to this time, no nation, certainly neither of

the two in question, had established any absolute claim to the country north of Lower California. Drake had harried the Spaniards, and had taken possession of the Californian coast in the name of Elizabeth; British navigators, also, had in later times done more than those of any other nation to determine the northern shore line and to make it known to the world. Spain had to all intents abandoned the field. On the other hand, the United States might claim to have solved the mystery of the Great River of the West. As yet, moreover, there had been no actual occupation of Nootka, and only a nominal possession of Vancouver Island, by Great Britain. The situation, therefore, was chaotic. About the beginning of the nineteenth century, however, a number of events combined to create an interest in the country west of the Rocky Mountains that commanded order to arise. The question, to which of the two Anglo-Saxon nations the Oregon territory belonged, was slowly formulating itself.

At first its utterance was no more than a whisper—a passing word in the halls of diplomacy and state. Forty years before, the capture of Quebec and the subsequent cession of Canada to England had changed the face of politics on the continent. To this had succeeded the American revolution, a counter-change still more momentous. The new conditions, however, did not make themselves felt at once in the western country. It was

not, in fact, until 1803, that any echo of the great events that had happened on the Atlantic was heard on the Pacific. It came then as the result of very special circumstances. In 1762, Spain had ceded to France in perpetuity the whole of the territory of Louisiana. There has already been occasion to remark the vagueness of the region included in that comprehensive term. In the cession of 1762, no attempt was made to dispel the uncertainty; and indeed it would have been impossible. In the following year, a treaty which considerably modified this arrangement was concluded between France and Spain on the one hand, and Great Britain and Portugal on the other, but again not a word was included as to the eastern or western limits of Louisiana, though Great Britain was granted Canada, Florida and the portion of Louisiana "east of the line drawn along the Mississippi from its source to the River Iberville, thence along the middle of the Iberville and the Lakes Maurepas and Pontchartrain to the sea." In the course of events, the territory was again ceded back to France in 1800, and in 1803 passed by purchase into the possession of the United States. Immediately the question of its boundaries arose, this time with an insistence that demanded an answer. How far north and south were they? What were the southern limits of British territory? To its earlier possessors, Louisiana had been a word and little more; to the

United States it was the gateway to a golden future. Spain and Great Britain were the other nations affected, as the possessors of contiguous territory to the south and north. Spain on the one hand claimed the whole of the territory west of the Mississippi, to which the United States opposed a counter claim to an enormous portion of the coast of the Mexican Gulf. As against Great Britain, the view held was that the 49th parallel of latitude marked the southern limit of British possession east of the Rockies. Both of these disputes were postponed for settlement from time to time with results unfortunate to British interests.

Varying estimates have been placed upon the character of Thomas Jefferson, author of the Declaration of Independence, and third president of the United States. Whether as a result of Jefferson's personal initiative or of the foresight of his advisers, several notable events occurred within the period of his influence to determine the trend of circumstances unfavourably to British interests beyond the Mississippi. These were: the acquisition of Louisiana, for which Napoleon was paid the sum of $15,000,000; the expedition of Lewis and Clark to the mouth of the Columbia River; and the founding of Astoria by the Astor Fur Company. Whoever pointed the way, the foundation was laid in these events for the expansion of the republic across the Mississippi and beyond the Rocky Mountains.

In the meantime, and while the dream was forming in his mind, the territory of a foreign nation intervened. This obstacle removed, the genius of the American people, it was thought, might be trusted to do the rest. But the Louisiana purchase did not fully accomplish the end that Jefferson had in view. The added claim of exploration was still lacking. It was to establish this that Jefferson now equipped the second great expedition to cross the continent. Lewis and Clark, men with military experience, were placed in command. As the journey was long and hazardous, and the territory through which it lay unknown, the president took the utmost care to provide against every contingency. The objective was the mouth of the Columbia, to the credit of discovering which the United States already laid claim; but it was by no means certain where the expedition would end. If the Pacific were reached at all, it might be in Spanish, British or Russian territory. The impression was accordingly conveyed that the expedition was in the interests of science and literature alone, and to this end the coöperation of the other nations was sought and obtained. The leaders were supplied with passports by the representatives of the powers at Washington, so that they might travel without hindrance through foreign territory, and were furnished besides with letters of credit for use in foreign ports. At the same time a confidential message was despatched to congress disclosing the real object of

the enterprise, which was to strengthen the claim of the United States to the distant west against the day of settling the respective titles of the nations having interests between the Mississippi and the Pacific. The ruse was in every detail successful. Not only were the necessary funds forthcoming; but the representatives of the foreign powers at Washington vied with each other in rendering their assistance. The details of this famous expedition are not germane to the present narrative. It was thoroughly equipped, though costing only $2,500; it consisted of forty-five persons; the starting-point was St. Louis. The route lay from Illinois through regions since known as Missouri, Kansas, Iowa, Nebraska, South Dakota, Montana, Idaho, Washington and Oregon. The main waterways followed on the eastern side of the mountains were the Missouri and the Yellowstone; and on the Pacific side, the Lewis, the Kooskooskee, and the Columbia. The continental divide was surmounted in three places, many miles apart. Though great hardships were often encountered, and sometimes suffering and immediate peril there was but one life lost. The expedition occupied over two years, from May, 1804, until August, 1806, during which time all communication with the outside world was suspended and an immense mass of exact information respecting this hitherto unexplored territory was made available. Lewis and Clark wintered at Fort Clatsop, on the Pacific Coast. This great

expedition, so successfully brought to an end, was not the only one that Jefferson had in mind; but the futile mission of John Ledyard to Russia and the ignoble ending of the project of André Michaux, for which Lewis volunteered, call for no special comment. In the light of events, it is unnecessary to emphasize the momentous consequences which flowed from the Louisiana purchase and the Lewis and Clark expedition. Seldom has appreciation more acute of the greatness of an opportunity been seen in history; seldom has the wisdom that divined possessed the power to execute in equal measure. Jefferson was the prototype of American diplomacy; Lewis and Clark were the prototypes of the men who followed its voice and reaped its harvest.

The logical sequel of the journey of Lewis and Clark was the formation in 1810 of the Pacific Fur Company by John Jacob Astor of New York. The organization has been made a name in literature by Washington Irving. Astor had risen from humble circumstances to great wealth and political influence. He was the friend of Jefferson, and the project of extending the territory of the United States westward, doubtless owed much to his encouragement. Appreciating to the full, from his intimate association with the fur trade, the value to commerce of the territory west of the Mississippi, Astor's ambition was to obtain for himself a sphere of influence in the United States similar to that possessed by the North West and Hudson's Bay

Companies in British America. Not less anxious was he, for the same reason, to see the 49th parallel extended to the Pacific Ocean as the dividing line between the two countries. There can be little question that when the Lewis and Clark expedition was decided upon, it was with the entire concurrence of Astor. From Irving, who deals at length with Astor's aims and methods, we learn of the close relationship which existed between him and the administration; it is not, therefore, far to seek for the inspiration of Jefferson's policy. Astor, the rival of the British fur companies, was the only man who had an overpowering self-interest in extending the United States westward to the Pacific.

The Pacific Fur Company was not the first United States organization of its kind, but it was the first which carried out its aims in accordance with a comprehensive plan combined with practical business experience and ability. The operations which it immediately set on foot partook of the nature of a national effort to counterbalance the success of the British companies and divert the fur trade from Montreal to New York. Thus, though its object was in the main a business one, it had, at the same time, many features that appealed to wider sympathy and support. The main features of Astor's project, as embodied in his company, involved the establishment of a line of posts along the Missouri and the Columbia to the mouth of the latter, where the chief trading dépôt of the com-

pany was to be situated. Subsidiary posts were to be set up in the interior and on the tributary streams of the Columbia to trade with the Indians; these would draw their supplies from the main establishment and bring to it the peltries they collected. Coasting vessels would be built and fitted out on the Columbia, to trade, at favourable seasons, along the north-west coast, and to return with the proceeds of their voyages to the place of deposit. In this way the entire Indian trade, both of the interior and of the coast, would converge at the mouth of the Columbia. A ship was to be sent annually from New York with reinforcements, supplies, and merchandise suited to the trade. It would take on board the furs collected during the preceding year, carry them to Canton, invest the proceeds in the rich stuffs of China, and return thus freighted to New York. What was of importance in the scheme was the development of trade with the Russian establishments on the north-west coast. This suggested many possibilities. As a preliminary step, a staff experienced in the Indian trade and inured to life in the wilderness was necessary. This was recruited in Montreal. Three prominent employees of the North West Company were among those who accepted the terms of Astor. A personal representative and chief agent was appointed. The Pacific Fur Company was then incorporated and the work of organization perfected to its final details.

The expedition which it was determined at once to send out for the realization of these plans was divided into two parties; one to proceed in the ship *Tonquin* by way of Cape Horn to the Columbia; the other to follow in the footsteps of Lewis and Clark across the continent. The quarrels of the members of the party on the *Tonquin* with her captain; the final loss of the *Tonquin* and the murder of her crew by the natives at Clayoquot; the sending of a second ship from New York; and the terrible sufferings of the overland party under Hunt, are familiar history. The establishment of Astoria and its varying fortunes need not detain us here. By a series of mishaps it soon passed into the possession of the North West Company. Irving assigns the failure of the enterprise primarily to the loyalty of the employees to Great Britain and their former masters the North West Company. The final blow was the War of 1812. When peace was declared, Fort Astoria was ceded back to the United States, though without prejudice to the rights of Great Britain to the territory in which it was situated. The Pacific Fur Company, however, made no further attempt to carry out the projects of Astor; and the North West Company, and subsequently the Hudson's Bay Company, continued in occupation of the fort for a time. The abiding importance of the experiment lies in the fact that the occupation of the Columbia by the Astorians was

put forward at the time of the settlement of the boundary question as one of the strongest claims in behalf of the United States. This international aspect of the case will be referred to later in the present volume.

It may be well to recapitulate in proper sequence the five great transcontinental expeditions of these early times as follows:—(1) The expedition of Alexander Mackenzie, by the Peace, Tacouche Tesse, Blackwater and Bella Coola Rivers, in 1793. (2) The expedition of Lewis and Clark, by the Missouri and the Columbia Rivers, in 1805. (3) The expedition of Simon Fraser, by the river which bears his name, formerly the Tacouche Tesse, in 1808. (4) The expedition of David Thompson, by the Columbia River, in 1807-11. (5) The overland expedition of the Astorians in 1811. Among the most glorious in the history of the Anglo-Saxon race, these great achievements must, for the moment, be remembered in their special and less happy significance: as shedding light upon the bitter rivalry which was to follow—of which indeed they were already the beginning—between the mother and daughter countries for the continent so dauntlessly won for their common civilization.

It has now been shown, however briefly, by what steps the Pacific coast first became known to the world; and it has been noted, also, how the over-

land explorer completed the work of the navigator. The fur trader, it has been seen, was the first to enter the new country, and his forts and dépôts were the first roofs, as his trafficking with the Indians was the first act of commerce, in the great interior. The remainder of this chapter may be fitly devoted to a statement of certain broad and salient features in the life and methods of this striking type as it existed during the first fifty years of the last century. These were the days of the trader in the full flush of his glory, and the recital of his leading characteristics, however familiar, is necessary to give a background to the succeeding narrative. In this it will be understood that the reference throughout is to the Hudson's Bay Company, which in 1821, after a struggle which had ended in armed hostilities and the effusion of blood, absorbed the North West Company, and from that time forward, retaining only what seemed best in its former constituent bodies, completely dominated the trade and the life of the western country.

How the great enterprise—"the Governor and Company of Adventurers of England trading into Hudson's Bay"—came to birth in the revival of mercantile activity which followed the restoration of King Charles II; how Rupert, Prince of England and Bohemia, dashing cavalier and patron of commerce, became its founder; how the powers con-

ferred upon it in that lavish age included, in addition to the "whole, entire and only liberty of Trade and Traffick," the virtual control of a third part of North America, with authority to frame laws, administer justice, wage war or make peace therein; how its early servants planted its rule on the edge of the wilderness amid difficulties that would have driven back any but the most determined of men; how through a century and a half of steady progress—of bloody wars with the French, implacable rivalries with other traders, thrilling adventures and vicissitudes innumerable —it drove its purposes to a victorious end, sending out its explorers on journeys that gave a new face to the continent, naming some of the greatest rivers and mountains of the earth, spreading step by step the arteries of its trade and the empire of its flag over thousands of miles, and over thousands of souls; civilizing sometimes, corrupting and degrading often, bartering continually;—all these varied and commanding activities combine to form an episode unrivalled for the romantic and the picturesque in our history.

The general system under which the company carried on its multiform and far-extending business has been many times described. In the manner in which it adapted means to ends it could have little to learn from the largest enterprise of modern days. The minuteness of the trade and the tremendous distances which it traversed rendered necessary a

method of accounting, at once the most elaborate and exact. For organization purposes, the vast dominions of the company were divided into four great departments. These were again divided into districts. Each district had its fixed and permanent trading-posts, as well as a number of temporary or flying stations, the latter frequently the precursors of the former. Here were the vital points of contact between the company and the trade from which it drew its life's blood: here the traders met and bartered with the Indians. Important posts or parties, together with the transportation service, were in the charge of chief clerks; a lower grade of employees managed the outlying stations. The districts were under the chief traders. In the departments, dépôts and distributing points were presided over by the factors, while over all the chief factor bore rule. An army of postmasters, interpreters, mechanics, guides, canoemen and apprentices made up the rank and file, though even here degrees were strictly recognized. In general terms, the service was made up of three classes; the servants, the clerks and apprentices, and the officers. The second class sat at the officers' mess and were addressed as gentlemen. But the officers were the real oligarchy, bound by special covenant to fidelity, and receiving their reward not in salary but in a share of the company's profits. Subject to the orders of his superior and the regulations of the company, each officer was supreme in his sphere of duty. The

INTERIOR OF A CREE INDIAN TENT, 1820

From an engraving in the Public Archives of Canada

system, as will be seen, was military in its absolutism. The chief factor was lord paramount; his word was law, to support and symbolize which the office was enveloped in a halo of dignity. When a chief factor transacted the most ordinary business, his habiliments were elaborate and imposing; when he travelled, it was in state, with a retinue by whom he was lifted in and out of his conveyance, his arrivals and departures heralded by the firing of salutes. High above all reigned the governor of the company, a personage scarcely less exalted than the most absolute of sovereigns, owing allegiance to no one save the directorate in London, whose policy, as a matter of necessity, was largely dictated by his advice. Great indeed was the majesty that hedged about a governor of the company. But the show was no greater than the reality, though part of a deliberate plan to overawe the natives and subordinates where rebellion or mutiny would have meant extinction. It succeeded in so far as the immediate object was concerned; but, as examples show, it had sometimes an unhappy effect upon the ruler.

The company's Western Department, with which the present narrative has chiefly to do, included the entire region between the watershed of the Rocky Mountains and the Pacific Ocean, bounded on the north by Russian territory and the Northern Department (the latter embracing the country drained by the rivers running into the Arctic Ocean and Bering Sea) and on the south by

the Mexican republic. Roughly, it extended a thousand miles in length, by half that distance in average width. The dépôt for the department was, in the early days, at Fort Vancouver, a post of considerable size (its stockade measuring 750 feet in length by 600 feet in breadth) situated on the Columbia River six miles above its junction with the Willamette. Afterwards it was removed to Victoria. Here the company's goods were received from abroad for distribution throughout the coast and the interior. Here were collected the furs as they were sent in by the traders for subsequent transportation to England around Cape Horn. Here, too, were the headquarters of the chief factor and the heart of the official life of the region. While Fort Vancouver remained the dépôt for a period of some twenty-three years, the districts north of the Columbia landed their supplies at the mouth of the Okanagan, and packed them on horses thence to their destination. For the service of the other districts, lying nearer the coast, the furs and goods were carried to and from the Fraser River. Goods for the Upper Columbia and Kootenay were landed at Fort Colville near the Rocky Mountains; those for the Snake River were landed at Walla Walla. The former became in time the centre of all the trade on the Columbia—the last post touched at by the brigades on their long journey from Fort Vancouver to Norway House. The coast ports were supplied by sailing vessels, the returning

boats and vessels bringing in the furs collected at the several ports. The trade in New Caledonia, and in what is now known as the Yukon in the Northern Department, was carried on by way of the Athabaska route, of which the forts on Hudson Bay were the *entrepôts*.

Tha activity of the company in the Western Department was by no means restricted to the trade in peltries. In process of time, large farms were established in the vicinity of Fort Vancouver, on Puget Sound, in the Willamette valley and in other parts of the country. The trade in horses, cattle, sheep, pigs and general farm produce, soon attained importance. The erection of grist-mills, saw-mills, tanneries and dairies followed. A considerable fishing industry sprang up. Within a few years, the ships of the company were regularly exporting flour, grain, beef, pork and butter to the Russian settlements in Alaska and Siberia, lumber and fish to the Sandwich Islands, and hides and wool to England. The company was the first to open the coal mines of Vancouver Island, at Fort Rupert first and later at Nanaimo. The wants of its own communities and of the vessels of the coast furnished the original incentive; but the sale of a thousand tons to a vessel bound for California, during the height of the mining excitement, proved the inauguration of a trade that has since become of first importance to the district. It was, in fact, the proportions reached by the general commerce

of the department, even at an early stage of its development, and the industries thus founded and nourished, that first attracted the attention of the outside world to the potentialities of the Pacific coast, the result being a gradual process of settlement that eventually extinguished the company's rule. The debt that is owing to the men who were the first to recognize in the natural resources of the country still greater possibilities than existed in the gathering of peltries—even though they could not clearly foresee the effect that was to follow for the company whose servants they were—is one that could not easily be overestimated. Had they followed tamely in the footsteps of precedent; had they lacked sagacity to perceive the wealth that lay in the fertile valleys, the teeming rivers and the timber-clad hillsides of the vast dominion whose present destiny they shaped at will, they might have purchased for the great master of their allegiance a few doubtful years of the power to barter "skin for skin;" but they would have thrown back the progress of the coast at least a quarter of a century, and they would have missed the opportunity of conferring upon their country a boon far beyond the gift of any corporation bound to a single circle of activity.[1]

A word may be added as to the treatment accorded by the company to the Indians,—its equals in trade, its benefactors even, but with all the

[1] See appendix "D"

pathetic helplessness of an inferior race. There can be no doubt that the company was, before everything else, a keen trader. It took the Indian as it found him—and it kept him so. To be a hunter and a wanderer was the Indian's nature; he would have been useless to the company had he been otherwise. There was no effort, accordingly, to civilize him,—none, for almost two centuries, to Christianize him. But he received justice—or what he thought was justice—even kindness, dictated though both were by policy. To gain the Indian's confidence was a necessity of the trade; and the company made sure of this. In two centuries of rule over tribes of every shade of racial difference, ranging from the Eskimos of the Labrador and Arctic coasts, through the Crees, Sioux and Blackfeet of the interior, to the polyglot chaos of tribes that dwelt along the Pacific Ocean, war was unknown and violence and bloodshed only an occasional incident. Thousands of miles from any force of arms, trade was carried on in scores of factories in perfect trust. The coast tribes of the Western Department were perhaps more truculent and excitable than any on the continent, yet here as elsewhere Indian outrage was comparatively unknown. The manner in which intercourse between the trader and the Indian was held had much to do with this result. Respect was aways paid to fairness in exchange. Docile as the Indian was, and avid of the goods that made his barren existence happier, this was

no difficult task. In other respects an equal discretion was displayed. The relations established were ever those of reserve; familiarity was permitted on no pretext, though firmness was tempered with tact, courtesy and the constant expression of good-will. The frequent intermarriages of traders with native women did much to secure the good feeling of the Indian, and to further the interests of the company. That some of the traders were profligate must be admitted; that rum found its way into the trade has been proved; but in these, as in other matters, the law of self-preservation was the constant monitor of the company. In the summing up, history will accord thanks to the company for the fruits of its attitude towards the Indian. Without that preparation of the Indian mind, the peaceful settlement of the country would have been impossible. When the hour of the fur trade had struck and the settler stood at the gateway of the mountains, he found a native race subdued to the methods of the white man, and ready to play its part in the new order. The Indian is to-day a more important factor in the labour market of British Columbia than of any other portion of the Dominion.

Of the life that went on beneath the extraordinary surface of the company's system and policy, who could give even a glimpse in a page? It was a world in itself, so romantic and full of wonders that every fireside has listened to the story of it. Over

half a continent it embraced scenes the most varied and sublime on the earth—the forest growth of ages, pathless and impenetrable; the endless prairie, roamed by millions of bison; mountain lands unrivalled for wildness and grandeur; all alike interlaced by one of the most beautiful and majestic chains of waterways in the world, running down into the everlasting sea which bore the company's trade to its ultimate markets. Dotting the wilderness, hundreds of miles apart, were the "forts" or trading-posts of the company, whence it drew sustenance and by which it kept its grasp upon the land. Even these were stamped with individuality. Built, large and small, upon a common plan—a low and quadrangular centre structure surrounded by high palisades, flanked by bastions and defended by six- and twelve-pounders—they aptly proclaimed the rigour that ruled within. This was no less than martial law, to transgress which was punished with swift and ruthless severity, and from which the only seasons of respite came at Christmas and the New Year, or on the days, many months apart, on which news and letters were brought from the outside world—sunbursts of joy that made their recurrence the chief solace of an existence unparalleled for monotony and isolation. The brigades were the agents of this beneficence, the tie that bound the forts together, and constituted the veins and arteries of the system. In summer they came with goods in "York boats,"—nine tripmen to

each, and eight boats to the brigade—or by cart and cayuse over the prairie; in winter they brought only letters and newspapers by sledge and snow-shoe, the gaily caparisoned dog trains making forty miles a day over the snow, sheltering under trees and bushes, and covering once a year the entire round of the company's trading-posts. But the real bond of union was the comradeship of the service which laid its spell (or its terror) upon all, the essence of which, for rude and polished alike, was its touch upon the aboriginal and the elemental in both wild and human nature. In such a setting, life took on varied forms. The man of mighty will turned all to power, triumphing over difficulties that subdued and appalled others, and rose because he could do nothing else. Others in whom the flame burned less fiercely, adapted themselves to their surroundings and hewed out paths of useful effort. Others were broken utterly, consuming their hearts in the awful toil and loneliness until death or madness came.

The roll of honour in the company's western service is a long and illustrious one. From 1805 to 1846, and in British Columbia until 1858, the fur trader ruled on the coast. It was not an absolute sway: the settler arrived early to dispute it; and the half-century was one of conflict and evolution. Simpson, Ogden, Ermatinger, McDonald, McLeod, Tod, Yale, Dallas, Finlayson, Anderson, Black, McKay, Ross, Campbell, Murray, Dease, Rae, Tolmie,

Grahame, are some of those who bore a share, in the early and formative period, in directing the energies and moulding the destinies of the country, each in his own field and method. Their impress can never be obliterated. But from the list of all that generation two names stand out preëminently in the history of the upbuilding of the Pacific Slope—McLoughlin and Douglas. Occasion more than once will be offered in the following pages to note the striking personality of the former of these great men. He was the founder and the patriarch—the first great leader of the company in Oregon. He made the career of Douglas, who was his friend and follower, possible. The superior of his disciple in all that touched the human and the lovable; magnetic, impulsive, eager; Napoleonic in the swiftness of his judgments and of his movements to execute them; resolute, brave and chivalrous, McLoughlin was swept from his feet in the end by a movement that struck at his emotions and his sense of right—the right of the mass as opposed to that of an individual interest. He could not, or he would not, stem the tide of settlement from the United States, so fatal to the company's and, as it proved, to his country's future. And when, in 1846, the land north of the Columbia to the 49th parallel passed to the United States, he went with it, divorced from an allegiance to which his whole life had been devoted. Douglas, his successor, less keen and restless; of an order of genius that had less

perhaps of fire and humanity but more of purpose and obedience; studious, orderly, tactful and resourceful; commanding a rigid respect and admiration, if not love; one at all times master of himself and his surroundings, was undoubtedly the greater officer, if not the greater man. Of the two, Douglas must always remain of larger interest to the historian. He came into command at a moment of supreme importance in the period of rapid transition from old to new conditions, for which McLoughlin had opened the door. Unshackled by doubts of any kind, he was in a special degree qualified to deal with developments which he could not wholly control, but which he could influence powerfully in the direction of the company's interests, while at the same time clearly foreseeing that they must result in a new order wherein the company would cease to be a ruling factor. It was in truth to this last point that the enterprise of the fur trader in building forts to be the centres of future settlement; in opening lines of communication throughout the interior to be the avenues of future commerce; and in the bringing of ships to the coast dépôts to establish intercourse with the outside world, inevitably converged. Even a less clear-sighted observer than Douglas could not but see in the movements which drove the company out of Oregon and which planted a colony in the valley of the Red River, something that portended the ultimate extinction

of its sovereignty in the west and the erection of popular government in its stead. Of never-fading interest in themselves the lives of the traders in the wilds of the interior and on the shores of the Pacific must always remain. That strange and varied period is a subject, probably, of which the ground has been no more than broken. McLoughlin was of it, and his lamp was extinguished when the trade passed away. Douglas too was of it, blood and bone; but he was something more. As has been said, our interest in the fur trade is for the fruits it bore in subsequent history. We have to watch its huge and tireless mechanism as, in measured process, James Douglas, the most notable figure which it produced in the country west of the Rocky Mountains, rose step by step to the post of chief command, thence, by the inevitable sequence of events, as the company gave place to civil government, to become the first representative of the Crown in a British colony on the Pacific Ocean.[1]

[1] See appendix "E"

CHAPTER III

NEW CALEDONIA

CONCERNING the early life of Sir James Douglas, little is known. He was not in his youth a keeper of diaries, and there are few records of the long period of his apprenticeship to the North West and Hudson's Bay Companies, prior to his assumption of command at Fort Vancouver. The generation which knew him in the flesh has passed away. In the family circle he was not a purveyor of official small news. Neither was he given to reminiscence or to talk of himself or of his exploits. When he passed from the scene he did not leave behind him a single purely personal record either of his actions or of the opinions and early experiences on which they were based.[1]

This might at first appear remarkable in a man who at all times so fully recognized the importance of his position in so far as mere forms were concerned. How seriously he could consider this aspect is well illustrated in a letter which he wrote in May, 1859, to the governor of the Hudson's Bay Company. It was evident that he could not occupy the dual position of governor of the Pacific colonies and representative of the company, and it was necessary, therefore, that he should retire from the

[1] A journal kept by Douglas at Fort Vancouver, quoted by Bancroft, has disappeared.

service of the latter. This he was willing to do, conditional on the payment of £3,500 as a retiring interest:

"In the event of the rejection of that offer," he wrote, "I must resign my office of governor, as the salary offered, £1,800 per annum, is altogether inadequate to my support in a becoming manner.

"As a private individual I can live in a style befitting the fortune I possess; but as governor for the Crown, there is no choice: one must live in a manner becoming the representative of the Crown, and I could never consent to represent Her Majesty in a shabby way."

The fact is that the manner of a chief factor clung to him to the last in governmental, company, and domestic relations. This was second nature to all Hudson's Bay Company officials. Douglas, however, was to an exceptional degree steeped in the ceremonial of official life, and the fact has led to not a little misinterpretation of his character. The fondness of display and the autocratic methods with which he has been charged were in fact the natural outcome of his long and devoted service to an organization famed the world over for its iron discipline, joined to the trait which he displayed from first to last of taking high and serious ground even in small things. His early training, acting upon a spirit essentially religious, shaped his whole after career to this pattern of conduct and bearing. It would have been easy for a nature, nourished as

his had been in mountain solitudes to exaggerate the importance of command. Yet Douglas was remarkable throughout his whole career for nothing more than for his sane self-knowledge.

An evidence that his self-assertiveness was on the surface merely may be deduced from the fact that he failed entirely to foresee the interest which the historian would one day attach to his life and personality. He did not apparently realize that, as a chief factor of the Hudson's Bay Company on the Pacific coast for many years, and as the first governor of the colonies of Vancouver Island and British Columbia, he was moulding future events and must one day stand as the central figure of his time. Official statements he put forth in plenty; but the record of his life, as a whole, as throwing light upon the most interesting half century in western history, he invariably refused to compile, nor could he ever be brought to see anything in the success he had achieved which would add interest to his personal opinions or actions. A natural repugnance to publicity in part accounted for this. He was a man of great reserve, though of strong passions and deep feelings. But, above all, the unwritten law of the company stood in the way; it is easy to appreciate how such an obstacle appealed to James Douglas. Unbroken silence on all matters of its internal economy, is the rule of the company for its servants. Reminiscences, even of the purely literary kind, were never encouraged;

and there are volumes of unwritten history in the archives of the company to-day, which have never become accessible to the student.[1]

Of these invaluable aids to the historian, therefore—the memoir, the sheaf of letters, the diary written solely from the personal standpoint—we have few at hand for use in writing the life of Sir James Douglas. The loss is great. With the events of the period during which he ruled on the coast, he was more familiar than any other man. A history by Douglas of the fur trade in the country west of the Rocky Mountains, or of the early colonial period on the Pacific, would have been a document the most valuable of its kind. As a lover of biography, and a careful student of politics, he might have been expected to employ the leisure of his later years in literature and to have enriched it from his own unique experience. He possessed, besides, a gift of style, as his State papers show. That he passed from the scene in silence is one of the most striking instances we have of the indifference of the men who bore the brunt of the early battle with the wilderness, and who solved the earliest problems of social organization and government, to everything but the practical side of the events in which they played so large a part.[2]

The greatest of men are creatures of circumstance; but they are also springs of action; and what

[1] See appendix "F"

[2] See appendix "G"

we commonly term destiny is often a convenient word for the complex relationship of man and his environment. Political history, thus conceived, becomes the biography of the makers of nations. Every man is the product of his age; but every age is what its greatest men have made of it. It is in this spirit that the present life of Douglas, shorn largely from necessity of personal detail, has been written. He, more than any other man, gave form to British Columbia. As the legend in the great London cathedral bids the reader look around if he would see the monument of him whose mind conceived the majestic pile; so, if one would seek a measure of the achievement of Sir James Douglas, let him behold the fair province of the mountains and the Pacific, whose sturdy growth bore in its early fashioning the lasting impress of his handiwork. The life of Douglas, therefore, serves as no other would for text from which to hang a connected narrative of the origin and progress of British Columbia, youngest perhaps of all the provinces in that her present but feebly foreshadows her great future, yet bringing our history into vital touch with the far-off time of the greatness of Spain, beginning even with that fateful day on which Cortes first . . .

> "Stared at the Pacific—and all his men
> Looked at each other with a wild surmise—
> Silent upon a peak in Darien."

James Douglas was born in Lanarkshire, Scotland, June 5th, 1803, not August 15th, the usually

accepted date. His father was a descendant of the Earl of Angus, the "Black Douglas" of Scottish history. Little is known of the father's youth or parentage, except that he was the son of one John Douglas, merchant, of Glasgow. A search of the Registry Office at Edinburgh reveals nothing of his earlier ancestry, John Douglas being a familiar name and frequently appearing in the Glasgow records.

Lieutenant-General Sir Neil Douglas, K.C.B., colonel of the 78th Regiment, who took part in the battles of Busaco, the Pyrenees, Seville and Toulouse, and whose gallantry on the field of Waterloo obtained for him the Austrian order of Maria-Theresa and the Russian order of St. Vladimir, was a cousin of James Douglas and has been described as the 'fifth son of the late John Douglas, Esq., of Glasgow whose grandfather, Douglas of Cruxton and Stobbs, descended lineally from the famous Earls of Angus." The lineage of Douglas was well known to his companions of the fur company, and he went for many years by the sobriquet of the "Black Douglas," a title for which his swarthy skin and stern cast of features were in part responsible.

James spent his early years in Scotland, and was educated in a private school at Lanark. He was a studious youth, conscientious and of regular habits, traits which characterized him through life. We are indebted to family tradition for the statement that his French tutor was

an exiled nobleman of France, who was the means of furnishing an accomplishment which Douglas was soon after to turn to very practical account. In a new country, engaged in a trade which brought him into daily contact with the French-Canadian *voyageur*, it was the most immediately useful part of his education. Nearly all the Hudson's Bay Company traders spoke French fluently, and when Sir James made a tour of the continent after his retirement as governor, he was still able to converse in French with a good accent.

It was in the year 1820 that Douglas left Scotland to seek his fortune in the service of the North West Company. The origin of his choice of a career is in obscurity, but two brothers appear to have preceded him in the same field. Although in his seventeenth year only, he was already tall and well developed, "with ideas beyond his age." That he had courage to leave kith and kin to plunge into the wilderness of the New World goes without saying. He reported at Fort William, the headquarters of the company, then under the rule of the celebrated John McLoughlin, who seems to have been struck immediately with the promise of the lad. But the career thus launched was destined to an early interruption. In 1821, the North West Company was absorbed by the Hudson's Bay Company (in what manner need not delay us here), and Douglas was of the party which regarded the terms of union with dissatisfaction. He

was on the point of returning to Scotland with his brothers, when McLoughlin persuaded him to throw in his lot with the new régime. The friendship of the older for the younger man, which was to bear such rich fruits later, was already firmly planted, in the soil of a warm and appreciative nature on the one hand, and of sterling merit on the other. McLoughlin was to have charge, under the new arrangement, of the vast territory lying west of the Rocky Mountains, then termed the Columbia Department, and he wrote to the directory to ask that Douglas might accompany him. The request was granted. In less than two years service, and before he had reached his twentieth year, Douglas had won the trust and friendship of the man who ruled an empire equal in area to a third of Europe and, though still in a state of savage nature, rich beyond measure in political and industrial possibilities. Great indeed was the opportunity; as will be seen, no part of it was thrown away.

McLoughlin had had a history of his own which is typical of the day and place. Born in 1784 at Rivière du Loup, he had lost his father while still a boy, and had grown up with his brother David in the gray stone mansion of his grandfather, Malcolm Fraser, overlooking the St. Lawrence where it widens to the sea. The children early caught a military bearing from the grandsire who had brought a Highland regiment to Canada and who had

settled later on a St. Lawrence seigniory. It was a discipline, too, of a thoroughly Scottish savour. Scottish books were read ; Scottish tales were told; the bagpipes droned in the hall; and the kilts were often worn. When the boys grew up, they were sent overseas, destined to the study of medicine at Edinburgh. But Napoleon had begun the war with England, and David fled his gallipots to follow the Iron Duke to Waterloo. John took another course. "I never could fight Napoleon—I admire him too much," he said, and returned to Canada. Arrived there, he had still his future before him. A story is told of the incident which sent him into the service of the North West Company—a quarrel with an English officer who had shown discourtesy to a lady on the streets of Quebec. But his uncles were high in the company, and the life might have appealed to him on other grounds. Birth, talent, and, above all, his splendid presence, brought rapid promotion. His first important command was at Sault Ste. Marie: it was in McLoughlin's time that the post was burned during the War of 1812. Here he had married the widow of his friend McKay. (McKay had crossed the continent with Alexander Mackenzie and had been one of those engaged by Astor in Montreal for his venture on the Pacific – a voyage from which McKay never returned, having been slain by the Indians on the ill-fated *Tonquin*.) Thence he passed to Fort William,

the metropolitan post of the company, then in its time of greatest splendour,—his hair white before he was thirty from an accident in Lake Superior, in which all but himself were lost. Of the remainder of his life there will be more in the sequel.

It was a part of McLoughlin's plans for Douglas, when, on the amalgamation of the companies, the faces of the two were turned westward, that he should not be confined too closely to any one branch, but that by a succession of duties he might become conversant with the entire range of the service. Consistent with his duty to the company, McLoughlin seems to have spared no favour that inured to the advancement of his protégé. Douglas was already an excellent accountant; he had moreover a thorough command of the language of the *voyageur*. The time was come, therefore, when he must learn at first hand the ponderous yet minute organization by which the operations of the united companies were conducted in the field. New Caledonia, the nucleus from which the present province of British Columbia was to evolve, was at the moment the most distant and difficult of McLoughlin's outlying departments. To New Caledonia, accordingly, went Douglas, after an interval spent with McLoughlin himself in the Athabaska district, for the very sake of the difficulties which offered there and the experience to be gained in encountering them. This was in 1823 or 1824.

A glance at the natural conditions and the state of development which awaited the young trader in New Caledonia will be of interest here. Dotted with innumerable lakes; thridded by a network of rivers, with the Fraser for central waterway; hemmed in and intersected throughout by mountains, clad in the south with the Douglas fir and in the north with spruce and pine; New Caledonia embraced, roughly, the whole of the territory between the Rockies and the coast range of mountains, from the valley of the Thompson on the south to the northern sources of the Peace. The interminable forest with which the district was covered yielded no food save berries, roots, and the flesh of animals; but the lakes and rivers abounded in fish and waterfowl. From time immemorial the region had been peopled by the western Déné Indians, the main branches of which were the Nahanais and Sekanais in the extreme north and east, the Babines and Carriers in the west and centre, and the Chilcotins in the south and west. They, as well as the white men who first entered the country, depended almost wholly upon the salmon for their food, so much so that the damming of a stream by a fall of rock would cause an entire tribe to remove. How Mackenzie discovered and how Fraser took possession of the country, has been already described. Rocky Mountain Portage, the first post of Fraser, was built in 1805. McLeod, the first permanent station ever erected in British

Columbia west of the mountains, still standing without a year of interruption, had been established soon after. The discovery of Stuart Lake followed; and Fort St. James, destined as the dépôt of the new district, arose on its banks in one of the most beautiful spots of that land of surpassing natural beauty. Fort Fraser, on Fraser Lake, and Fort George, on the Fraser River, were built in the same year. For three years longer, which included the famous descent of the great central river, the pioneers of the company laboured on the foundations of the new district. In 1809, Fraser returned east, to assume command in 1811 of the Red River Department. Too poor to accept the knighthood which was offered to him, he died in 1862 at the great age of eighty-six. Stuart, the right hand, according to some the brain, of Fraser's enterprise, succeeded him in New Caledonia, with Harmon[1] as first lieutenant. Stuart was still in command on the amalgamation of the companies in 1821, and to a large extent directed the expansion and multiplication of posts which immediately followed. Kamloops, the centre of the Thompson River district, had been built in 1813, the year in which communications were first established between the Columbia and the Fraser; and in 1821 the building of Fort Alexandria, on the Fraser, further facilitated the bringing in of supplies by the new route from the south instead of by the laborious passage from the east. Babine, famous for its salmon,

[1] See appendix "H"

was built in the following year, and Chilcotin, an outpost of Alexandria, situated among a tribe notable for its ferocity, about the same time. In 1824, however, the year from which the connection of Douglas with New Caledonia is dated, Stuart withdrew to the Mackenzie, and in his stead William Conolly, an Irishman of long experience in the trade, was appointed chief factor. Douglas who had been placed under the command of the new officer while McLoughlin went forward to the Columbia, was of the party which accompanied Conolly across the mountains when the latter first took office. With them were the wife and half-breed family of the chief factor, a convoy of twenty-four men, and the usual quota of supplies for the district.

At the time of Douglas's arrival, three clerks whose names are of frequent appearance in the later history of British Columbia, made up the staff of the chief factor at Stuart Lake—McDougall, Pambrun and Yale. At Fraser Lake, McDonnell was in charge, with an assistant clerk. At McLeod Lake, Alexandria, and Babine, the other important posts of the district, Tod, McDougall, and Brown were in command. The district was already very prosperous. Beside furs, such commodities as birch bark, pitch, sturgeon oil, pemmican, Indian rice, buffalo robes, snowshoes, parchment for windows, dressed buffalo and moose skins and buffalo tongues entered into the trade of the country, and returned good profits to the company. There were more than the

usual dangers and hardships in the service of that isolated district, and the fragments of old journals that have survived are replete with tales of suffering. The question of supplies pressed unceasingly ; and the treachery of the natives constituted a ceaseless menace. Sickness and desertions among the men were on a corresponding scale.

The record of Douglas's stay in New Caledonia is involved in much confusion and obscurity, some of which, at this date, is inexplicable. The leading incidents, however, stand out in greater or less relief; and it is possible to construct from them a narrative that is intelligible, if not at every point consecutive.

He remained at first with Conolly at Fort St. James, to the temporary command of which he succeeded from time to time during the absences of his chief. Later he served as clerk at McLeod Lake to John Tod, famed as a controversialist and writer of letters, and, as he gave satisfaction, we find in due course the annual council of the company recommending that he " be engaged for a term of three years from the expiration of his contract, at £60 a year." But he soon returned to the more important duties of Stuart Lake. Of his activities here some interesting details are given in the MS. journal of the fort, which, as they shed light upon the general nature of the life in New Caledonia, may be quoted here. As was said above, the maintenance of a constant supply of provisions was the first care of

the early trading-posts. In this connection a fishery had been established at the mouth of a small stream on Stuart Lake, where, in 1806, the company had met the first Indians of the country. The catch, however, had been uncertain, and it was finally resolved to establish a second station on the headwaters of another river falling into the same reservoir. Douglas was placed in charge of the new fishery, and the journal[1] contains the following references to his operations :

Saturday, November 10th, 1827,—" Received from the [old] fishery fifty-nine whitefish, the produce of two nights. Clermont brought over the greater part of the nets . . . . . To-morrow Mr. Douglas, with two fishermen, Bichon and Clermont, and two men to assist them will proceed to Yukogh (or Petit Lac) to establish the fishery there. This gentleman will not only superintend the fishery, but will also collect the fish which the Indians may have to dispose of immediately, for which purpose he is provided with leather [dressed skins] and other articles of trade."

Sunday, 11th,—" Mr. Douglas, with five men, set out for the fishery of Yukogh. They are well provided with nets, having eight of small thread, three of willow, and four of Holland twine . . . . . Most of the dogs are also sent to the fishery."

Wednesday, 14th,—" Vadeboncœur came from

[1] Quoted by Morice, *History of the Northern Interior of British Columbia*, pp. 127-9.

the fishery and informed me that these two days back they had not taken a sufficiency for their consumption. I ordered them to come across to-morrow to prepare to go and join Mr. Douglas at the other fishery."

From that date on we have frequent glimpses of the future governor hauling with dog sledges the fish he had taken at his station or had purchased from the Indians. The life was one of incessant toil and hardship even for the officers. To the end of his stay in New Caledonia, which was prolonged for six years, Douglas was busy with fish and furs, as the following entry in the journal made on the eve of his departure for Fort Vancouver shows:

January 1st, 1830,—" . . . . Mr. Douglas also returned from his trip. In the way of furs he was more successful than had been expected, having collected, principally among the Kuzche Indians, about one hundred and ten pounds' weight of excellent furs, chiefly beaver and martin. But the fish trade has entirely disappointed us, only about one thousand and six hundred having been procured, part of which the dogs have brought to the fort by Mr. Douglas's men."

For the rest, the story of Douglas's life in New Caledonia is involved in many discrepancies. In the main, it groups itself about two or three well defined incidents, which may be dealt with as nearly as possible in chronological order.

It was probably soon after his arrival at Stuart Lake that the young officer took to wife Amelia Conolly, the daughter of the chief factor of New Caledonia. She was then in her sixteenth year, described as a shy, sweet and lovable girl, "modest as the wood violet," and having in addition to personal beauty, the blood of native heroes in her veins. A younger sister Julia, who also married an officer of the company, shared in the family attractiveness, as her portrait by an artist who accompanied the first expedition of Sir John Franklin shows. Beautiful and accomplished, the sisters were admired of all. The stay of the young wife in New Caledonia after her marriage was of short duration. Following her husband to Fort Vancouver, there happened one of those perilous chances to which women as well as men in that stern period were exposed, her boat upsetting in the dangerous passage of the Fraser.

A description of the domestic life of the family in the later years of Fort Vancouver shows her ripened into a comely matron, her children about her knees, while Douglas on a Sabbath evening read to them from his Bible on the flower-decked porch of the officers' quarters. The eldest daughter of the family in after years married Dallas, who subsequently became governor of the company at Winnipeg. It may be added in passing that the status of Indian marriages had a personal bearing for Douglas from the fact that Conolly, his

father-in-law, on his retirement separated from his Indian wife and married again. Important legal proceedings followed, with the result that the first marriages in such cases were declared binding and the children legitimate.

There has been some debate as to the exact share borne by Douglas in the extension of the company's operations in New Caledonia during the period of his service there. That he was prominent in the work is the evidence of several. Interest has centred in this connection in the erection of Fort Conolly, so named from the chief factor, and designed to facilitate from its situation on Bear Lake the trade with the Sekanais Indians. Douglas has been considered by many as the guiding spirit in that enterprise. On other evidence, however, he was operating in a region remote from Bear Lake in the year in which Fort Conolly was founded. The fact is not of first importance, knowing as we do the general activity of Douglas in exploration, and having the assurance from indubitable sources that for six years crowded with incident he lived the full life of the district. His mastery of the Indian languages is but one evidence of the energy with which he threw himself into the work ; and on his retirement from New Caledonia he had already laid the foundations of a knowledge of the Pacific slope that was later to be unrivalled. One of the many vicissitudes that befell him at this period, easily the most fateful in his early life, may be re-

ferred to in some detail, not for its intrinsic importance, but as illustrating the character of the man, the life of the place and the precarious nature of the evidence on which it is necessary to rely in this portion of the narrative.

In 1823, Yale, who was in command of Fort George, had occasion to pay a visit to Stuart Lake. On his return the mangled bodies of his two assistants were found in an outhouse, at their side one of the company's axes with which they had been done to death by two Fraser Lake Indians. The motive of the deed is unrecorded. Yale was temporarily suspended on the ground of negligence, but on full investigation was reinstated. One of the murderers soon after paid the penalty of his crime. Several years elapsed, when in the summer of 1828, the survivor, Tzoelhnolle by name, hazarded a visit to Stuart Lake. Concerning the sequel we may note the versions of the more important writers who have considered the matter worthy of minute description.

Bancroft,[1] whose informant was John Tod of Fort McLeod,—an excellent authority, though over eighty miles distant at the time of the occurrence,—states that the occasion of the Indian's visit to Fort St. James was a native celebration, at a time when Douglas was in charge. The latter having been informed of the fact, immediately went in search of the murderer who took refuge under a pile of camp

[1] *History of the North-West Coast,* Chapter XX.

equipage. Though an arrow-point stared him in the face, Douglas and young Conolly seized the wretch and killed him, in requital of which the former was taken prisoner soon after by two hundred savages with blackened faces and compelled to pay compensation.

McLean[1] relates the incident somewhat as follows: The Indian having visited Fort St. James when Douglas was in command, and the latter, though with a weak garrison, having executed "wild justice" on the murderer, the tribe, thoroughly incensed, determined to obtain reprisal through a stratagem. The old chief came alone to the fort and was admitted; the matter was discussed at length, and seemed in a fair way of being settled when a knock was heard at the gate. "It is my brother," said the chief, "come to hear what you have to say." The gate was opened, when the whole of the Nekasey tribe rushed in. The men of the fort were overpowered; and though Douglas seized a wall piece, he was speedily borne down. His life was in the utmost peril as he was held by the chief while thirty or forty Indians surrounded him brandishing knives and shouting "Shall we strike?" The chief hesitated, and the life of Douglas was saved only by the prompt courage of the wife of the interpreter of the fort who harangued the Indians and secured his release.

[1] *Notes of Twenty-five Years' Service in the Hudson's Bay Territory*,—Vol. I. page 268.

AN EPISODE AT STUART LAKE

Father Morice,[1] who, in knowledge of the northern interior of British Columbia is without a peer, gives an entirely different account from the foregoing, quoting from native eye-witnesses. One of the murderers, according to Morice, had already paid the penalty of his crime, having been secretly slain by the company's servants who burned the remains in such a way as to suggest an accident, when the survivor visited Stuart Lake, Douglas being in charge. Hearing of his arrival, Douglas went in search, and Tzoelhnolle, though he hid under some skins, was quickly discovered. After an angry altercation, Douglas seized the murderer by the hair and fired at him with his blunderbuss, but the bullet flew wide; whereupon his men beat the life out of the Indian with hoes and clubs. The body was dragged out and left in the open; Morice adds that it was left to the dogs. Several days afterwards, the chief with the father of Tzoelhnolle arrived; Douglas was seized within the precincts of the fort; and the chief's nephew pointing a dagger at his breast impatiently asked, "Shall I strike?" A brave attempt at rescue by the young wife of Douglas was overpowered. Thereupon the women of the fort threw tobacco, clothing and other goods into the crowd, securing the release of Douglas.

These are only three of a great number of descriptions of an affair which has been given an alto-

[1] *History of the Northern Interior of British Columbia*, page 138.

gether disproportionate importance.[1] With reference to the last account, which is that of an unbending critic of the Hudson's Bay Company, some doubt may be permitted, notwithstanding the unrivalled knowledge of the author's, to a statement based on the traditions of local tribes and involving the ability of the native to recall at a date removed by half a century the circumstances of an incident concerning which he would have many temptations to fashion a version to his own credit. In any event, it would seem precipitate to base on this and other incidents in the early career of Douglas, the hypothesis that his removal to Fort Vancouver—the next great step in his career—came as a result of his inability to work in harmony with the Indians. Every reasonable estimate we have of the character of Douglas and of his value as an official is opposed to such a view. The change, as there is cause to believe, was in the way of preferment for success well earned in a difficult branch of the service, and for abilities already proved and now required in a larger field. It was carried out under the immediate direction of the governor, who, if any man, would be aware of the facts of the case, and would scarcely recommend for honour one who had jeopardized the company's interests in their most vital particular. We need hold no brief for either Douglas or the company in the

[1]For variations of the story see Gray, *History of Oregon*, p. 44; Hines, *Oregon History*, p. 392, etc., cited by Bancroft.

method in which justice was meted to the wretched native of the story ; but that the result was of far-reaching import to the career of the leading actor or to the relations of the company with the Indians, is perhaps beyond the ability of the historian at this date to demonstrate.

Before the transfer of Douglas to Fort Vancouver, he had the opportunity of receiving in New Caledonia no less a personage than the governor of the company, Sir George Simpson, then on his tour of inspection of the posts in 1828. A somewhat detailed account of the ceremonies of the occasion has survived. To impress the savage mind, it was thought advisable that the governor should make his entry into Fort St. James with even more than the usual amount of display. Within a mile of the lake the party halted, breakfasted, and decorated. The order of march was then arranged. The British ensign, fluttering to the breeze, was borne by a guide at the head of the procession. A band of buglers and bagpipers followed. Behind rode the governor, supported by the doctor of the party and a neighbouring chief factor, also mounted. Twenty men packing burdens next formed the line, while another officer with his wife and family brought up the rear. Arriving in view of the fort itself, the bugles sounded and the bagpipes struck up a famous march of the clans. Douglas replied with canon and musketry, advancing to receive his dis-

tinguished visitor. The first exchange of civilities ended, the line reformed, pipers and buglers entered the enclosure, and, marching along the gallery contiguous to the palisade, paraded in view of the wondering natives. Fourteen years later when the governor was on his famous voyage around the world, Douglas had a second time the honour of welcoming him to a post of the company. The scene was at Fort Vancouver, and Douglas had by this time risen to all but the first rank in the most important station of the company west of the Rocky Mountains.

The change to Fort Vancouver came in 1830. It marks the beginning of the career of Douglas as an officer of real importance to the company. McLoughlin's suggestion doubtless lay at the root of the transfer. A good accountant, possessed of administrative ability and capable of lightening the responsibility of the chief factor in minor affairs, was called for. Simpson himself had noted the capacity of Douglas during his visit to New Caledonia. The important nature of the post made the question of its officers a vital one. Ninety miles inland from the sea, on a green terrace sloping from the northern bank of the Columbia, Fort Vancouver, like a mediæval castle, was at once a refuge in time of danger, an oasis of civilization in a surrounding desert of barbarism, and a capital from which its commander ruled the adjacent

territory. The fur country immediately tributary was wide and rich ; and the Indian tribes to develop its resources were numerous. But it was more than this. Built by McLoughlin in 1824-5 on the abandonment of Astoria, Fort Vancouver had the threefold advantage of a central location, a surrounding country adapted to agriculture, and accessibility to sea-going ships. The fort, accordingly, for nearly a quarter of a century, was the emporium not only of the company's vast interior trade, but of the traffic by sea both coastwise and with England and the Orient. It formed the counterpart of York on Hudson Bay, with an even wider range of operations and involving even greater responsibilities, on account of its distance from Great Britain. McLoughlin for this reason was invested with more than the usual powers of chief factor, having to act to a great extent on his own initiative. In many ways he was as supreme even as the governor at Fort Garry. For twenty years his rule was that of a Czar over the territory that stretched from Alaska to California, and from the Rocky Mountains to the Pacific Ocean. Uncounted thousands of Indians—Cayuses, Walla Wallas, Okanagans, Nez Percés, Flatheads, Spokanes, Klickitats, Wascopams, Molallas, Callapooias, Tillamooks, Chinooks, Clatsops,—obeyed his behests and feared his displeasure. Over every waterway in that immense region he sent his Canadian *voyageurs* ; through hundreds of miles of forest he

dispatched his trappers and traders ; in and out of the fringing north-west islands, to Sitka itself, his schooners plied ; throughout the San Joaquin and Tulare valleys, over the Shoshone country, on the shores of Salt Lake and in the Yellowstone itself, his brigades pitched their tents ; all alike bringing home rich tribute to the company, and restlessly seeking further and ever further regions to subdue.

To share in this command, the first coadjutor of McLoughlin, Douglas, young as he was, had been chosen. It was an office great in its present powers and responsibilities ; in the hands of Douglas, its future was to lead him to still higher place and honour.

CHAPTER IV

FORT VANCOUVER

THE moment of Douglas's arrival at Fort Vancouver was an important one in the history of the company. Up to 1830 little had been accomplished west of the Rocky Mountains beyond the slow and laborious establishment of a single pathway to the sea and the subjection of the country immediately tributary. New Caledonia had been given, for the time, its full measure of development; but the situation of McLoughlin at Fort Vancouver was still, to outward seeming, not unlike that of Fraser twenty years previously. The new fort had, however, what Fraser's posts had not, the illimitable promise which the command of both sea and land and the adaptability of the latter for agriculture held out. With the building of Fort Vancouver in 1824 and the occupation of the Columbia, the way was cleared for a policy of expansion on a scale unprecedented in the previous annals of the company. For this, after six years of preliminary effort, the time was now considered ripe; and Douglas was a part of the material which was placed in the hands of McLoughlin. It was the fortune, therefore, of Douglas to be identified from the first with the movement which brought the whole of the coast and the lower mainland of

British Columbia under the subjection of the white man.

The full measure of the company's design at that period may be guessed from the part that was actually realized. McLoughlin was the directing spirit, though Douglas from the first entered fully into the confidence of his chief and assisted in the formation as well as the execution of his plans. That the company had in view a great trade north and south along the coast, with Russians and Mexicans as well as the native tribes; that it set no bounds to the regions it sought to dominate in the interior; that the Sandwich Islands were included in its commercial suzerainty; this much we know from history. That it cast its vision still further, to the Orient and the southern seas, is not improbable. Magnificent as was the dream of an ocean added to a continent for its sole trade, it was no more than the occasion seemed to warrant. Ocean and continent alike were a no-man's domain; not a rival in 1825-30 was in sight. But events moved too rapidly to leave so tremendous a development to private enterprise. The advent of the American colonist in Oregon, the establishment of the United States in California, and the definite partitionment of the north-west coast between Great Britain and the republic in the celebrated treaty of 1846, were destined to dissipate these hopes almost as soon as they were formed. The missionaries were in Oregon within a decade of McLoughlin him-

self; and they were followed by a population that was to drive the fur trader forever from the land.

For the forty years, however, that followed the advent of the white man west of the Rocky Mountains, the history of that territory is the history of the fur trade. Its earlier stages have been already outlined. In the present and in the following chapter will be noted the more important developments that ensued, with Fort Vancouver for centre, during the second quarter of the century, or until the division of Oregon between Great Britain and the United States, and the removal of the company's headquarters north of the 49th parallel. In discussing the period, it will be necessary first to trace the natural process of expansion, northward in the direction of Russian territory, southward towards California, as well as in the interior of New Caledonia and Oregon. Later, the movement contingent upon the settlement of Oregon and the determination of the international boundary, with the political consequences involved therein, will be briefly outlined.

The first step looking to the extension of the company's influence northward was taken almost immediately after the establishment of Fort Vancouver. In 1824, an expedition sent out by McLoughlin made a careful examination of the shoreward territory lying between the Columbia and the Fraser; and its members were the first to

enter the latter river from the sea. Before further action was taken, however, the strengthening of communications with New Caledonia, which, as above noted, had already been established through Kamloops and Alexandria, required attention. This was accomplished by the founding of Fort Colville, in 1825-6, on the Upper Columbia, a post which at once attained importance as a dépôt for the surrounding territory and as final place of call for the brigades which, from this time forward, began to pass regularly eastward from the coast to Edmonton and Norway House.

After this interlude, McLoughlin turned again to the north, and Fort Langley was erected on the Lower Fraser in 1827. Langley therefore represents the earliest occupation of the lower mainland of British Columbia. The schooner *Cadboro* which carried the crew and supplies for the new post was the first sea-going keel to ruffle the Fraser and the many bays of the neighbouring coast. Langley at once became important, the more so on account of its excellent salmon fishery. For a time, also, the trade of the coast northward was conducted through the Indians alone, with Langley as entrepôt.

But competition pressed, that especially of the American traders; and in 1831 a bold resolve was taken. Fort Simpson was tremblingly erected at the mouth of the Naas, some hundreds of miles north of Langley. It arose in the midst of the most treacherous savages known on the coast; and its

occupation became in a peculiar degree a test of military endurance. It was the outpost for many years of the company's effort to monopolize the north-west trade.

To occupy the territory between Fort Langley and Fort Simpson now became the concern of McLoughlin. In 1833, Finlayson, Manson and Anderson were sent north in the brig *Dryad*, John Dunn, known as the author of a history of Oregon, serving as their interpreter. At Millbank Sound, they were joined by McNeill in the *Llama*. (As throwing light upon conditions at this juncture, it may be explained that McNeill's first appearance on the coast had been as the agent of a Boston company with a shipload of gewgaws for the Indian trade. These completely outbid the company's staple commodities, with the result that McLoughlin, to rid himself of the nuisance, had bought the ship and her cargo outright and enlisted its captain in the company's service.) In the all but impenetrable forest that stretched to the water's edge, a space was cleared and a fort erected, closed in by the usual picket, one hundred and twenty yards square in this instance, with a height of eighteen feet. Such was Fort McLoughlin. From the first it was a scene of conflict with the Indians. Manson and Anderson were left in command, Tolmie succeeding Anderson in 1834 and Manson being replaced by Charles Ross in 1838. The first circulating library on the Pacific slope was founded by

Tolmie and Manson for the benefit of these posts. In the same year as Fort McLoughlin, Fort Nisqually was erected between Langley and Fort Vancouver, and in 1835 Fort Essington was built to serve as intermediate station between Forts Simpson and McLoughlin.

With the completion of these operations, the way was prepared for the inevitable collision with Russia that soon followed. As early as 1825 the need of a partitionment of interests between Great Britain and Russia on the north-west coast had been fully appreciated, and had resulted in the signing of a convention which was destined to affect far distant and strangely altered times and which therefore is among the most important episodes in the period at present in review. Under its terms, the subjects of both governments were free to navigate the Pacific and to trade with the natives of any shore not already occupied by Europeans. The traders might land at the posts of their rivals for shelter or repairs, but for no other reason, unless by express permission. Prince of Wales Island was established as the southern limit of Russian territory, the island to belong wholly to Russia. On the mainland, the boundary, after following the channel of the Portland Canal to the 56th parallel, was to lie along the summits of the coast range of mountains which it should follow parallel to the shore as far as longitude 141°. Thence it should run due north to the Arctic Ocean. Where the summits of the mountains,

however, from the 56th parallel northward should be more than ten marine leagues from the ocean, the dividing line, it was agreed, should curve with the curving of the shore at that distance. For ten years the British were granted the right to trade throughout the *lisière* and to the port of Sitka in all save arms, ammunition, and spirits. To the streams running through the shore-strip to the ocean, the right of navigation was granted in perpetuity. Such was the beginning of the Alaska boundary question, a matter that was not finally laid to rest until 1903. The terms were dictated purely by the circumstances of the rival trading companies, the only value of the coast-strip to the Russians being that it excluded the British from the trade of the interior. Intercourse was held at that time by the Russians only with the Indians of the coast, the latter bartering with the inland tribes at the head of the mountains. Furs and furs alone were the cause of contention in 1825 ; the land, which in 1903 was the point at issue, was at that time regarded as worthless.

The navigable rivers, it will have been noted, were left as an avenue by which the British traders might pierce the Russian cordon to the interior. In 1834, the first attempt to utilize this concession was made. The most considerable river crossing the strip of land below the 141st degree was the Stikine. To enter it, traverse the Russian zone, and establish a post in the hinterland, was the object of an expedition sent north

under Ogden and Anderson in the year mentioned. The party was well equipped, as befitted one whose mission was the founding of a station able to support itself a thousand miles from any base of supplies, and to fight both savages and rivals. But it had apparently reckoned without its host. At the mouth of the Stikine a Russian blockhouse was encountered, supported by a corvette and two gunboats to forbid the entrance to the river. The Russians well appreciated the danger to their trade that lurked in the designs of the British ; and the alleged sale of firearms and spirits to the natives was now used by Baron Wrangel, the Russian governor at Sitka, as the grounds for a request to the imperial government to rescind the clause of the treaty which gave the British access to the river. Without awaiting a reply, Wrangel had fortified the Stikine as soon as news of the projected move of the Hudson's Bay Company reached Sitka. The coast Indians, jealous of their commerce with the interior tribes, added their refusal to that of the Russian governor. Heated negotiations were conducted on the spot between the rivals ; but after a delay of a few days the company's ship was put about and returned to Fort Vancouver, armed with a lengthy protest and bill of losses for reference to the home government. On the way back, that the expedition might not be wholly fruitless, Fort Simpson was removed some forty miles to the south.

The negotiations that followed between Russia and Great Britain took shape finally in a com-

mission which met in London. As a result, the shore-strip reservation was leased to the Hudson's Bay Company by Russia at an annual rental of two thousand land-otter skins. The Stikine post was handed over; and permission was given to erect another post still further northward on the Taku. It was agreed also that the British should supply the Russians at Sitka with provisions, which the inclemency of northern latitudes prevented the Russians from raising for themselves. This arrangement was three times renewed, while, in addition to Fort Taku on the coast, two posts, Mumford and Glenora, were erected on the Upper Stikine, where they remained until the advent of the gold-seeker drove the game from the district.

Douglas played a prominent part in directing the events which ended as above described. Soon after his arrival on the coast he had revised and greatly improved the system of accounting by which the several posts of the department made annual returns to Fort Vancouver. At least once he had been in charge of the York Factory express, a difficult and dangerous service, the route lying by way of Walla Walla, Colville, and the Athabaska Pass, to Edmonton, thence to Hudson Bay and return.[1] This was in 1835, the party consisting of twenty-nine Canadians in three boats, eight months being consumed in the journey. It was Douglas, also, who, in 1840, was in command of the party which

[1] See appendix "I"

raised the British flag above Fort Stikine. The mission was of considerable importance. Rae, Finlayson and the son of McLoughlin, with fifty men, made up the force. By way of Nisqually and Langley, the latter being found in ruins from an Indian attack, and passing forts McLoughlin and Simpson, they steamed in the *Beaver* to the headquarters of the company in the leased territory, where the formal act of transfer was completed. A brave rescue by Douglas of a member of his crew who had been swept away while fording the icy waters of the Nisqually River was recorded on this journey. Rae, with eighteen men, was left at Stikine, and Douglas with the rest passed on to Sitka. Ten days were spent with Etoline in the final ratification of the agreement. Some words were dropped as to the purchase of Ross in California, but nothing definite resulted. On the return from Sitka, Fort Durham, commonly known as Taku, was erected. In that desolate spot of almost constant rain and snow, and among some of the wildest natives of the coast, it had a life of only three years. Douglas was again in charge of the party which dismantled the post. Fort McLoughlin on Millbank Sound was at the same time moved to the head of Vancouver Island and renamed Fort Rupert. Indian turbulence, here as in no other part of the company's dominions, constantly menaced its affairs. McLoughlin the younger, who had followed Rae at Fort Stikine, was shot in 1842, per-

haps the most signal victim of the animosity in the teeth of which the company drove its northern trade.

With the movement upon Russian trade by way of the sea, it had been decided to attack from the land as well; and the result was a series of expeditions in the northern interior of British Columbia that recall the days of Mackenzie and Fraser. With a courage not less conspicuous, the company pushed its way into the region of the Upper Liard and Yukon which the white man had never before seen. The incident belongs in part to the development of the Mackenzie River Department, and in part to later history, though it may fitly be mentioned here. On the Liard, the most wild and dangerous of all the great eastern streams that dash down from the Rocky Mountains, one of the earliest posts to be established within the confines of British Columbia was the fort which took its name from the river itself. Fort Nelson on the eastern branch, was built about the same period, or shortly after the beginning of the century. Twenty years later, Fort Liard was pillaged by the Indians and its people murdered. Meanwhile Fort Halkett had been founded on a higher branch, shortly after the amalgamation of the rival companies. In 1834, the Upper Liard was ascended by McLeod to its southern source in Dease Lake. It was not, however, until 1838 that a post was built in this remote country by a Scotsman named Robert Campbell, the

most distinguished man which the place and period produced, and the last of the great explorers which the fur trade gave to the western continent. Ordered to the Mackenzie in 1834, Campbell, after his operations at Dease Lake, crossed to the Pacific by the Stikine. Here he was taken prisoner by the Indians. On his escape, after terrible hardships, Fort Dease was burned to the ground. But it was not until 1840 that Campbell, under orders from Sir George Simpson, undertook the journey that was to make him famous. This was the ascent of the northern branch of the Liard through the great gorge that had previously barred all hope of access to its source, Lake Frances. After a desperate struggle, Campbell surmounted the barrier, and on Lake Finlayson, a tributary reservoir, saw the waters divide, part to flow into the Pacific, part to begin the long journey to the Arctic. Beyond the height of land he sighted the cliffs of the Pelly. After descending this river a few miles he turned back. The honour of naming it from himself he refused. In the year 1843, with a post on Lake Frances and another on Pelly Banks as a basis, he again set forth, but was again compelled, this time by hostile natives, to return, after reaching the point where the junction of the Lewes and the Pelly forms the great river of Alaska. It was not until five years later that Campbell's efforts were crowned with success. On that occasion, after erecting Fort Selkirk, 1848, at the mouth of the Lewes, he

traced the latter to its source. In 1850 he descended the Yukon several hundred miles to the junction of the Porcupine, where Fort Yukon, the most remote of the company's posts, lying one hundred and fifty miles within the Alaska boundary and on the Arctic Circle, had been built some four years earlier by Alexander Hunter Murray. Here Campbell united his own discoveries with those made by way of the lower and less difficult branches of the Mackenzie. Ascending the Porcupine and crossing to the Peel, he arrived by way of the Mackenzie at his original point of departure, Fort Simpson on the Liard. He had traversed in that great circle over three thousand miles of river and mountain; he had mapped a huge region which before had been wholly unknown; and he had given a lasting impetus to the trade inland in the direction of the Russian competitor; all with a forgetfulness of self that was only equalled by the splendid courage and endurance which the achievement demanded.

In California, the endeavour of the company to secure a foothold, while Fort Vancouver remained the entrepôt of the department, was extended over sixteen years. The descendants of the Spaniards, who now held the country after throwing off the yoke of Spain, had neither the enterprise to establish trade nor the inclination to foster it by government. Fish and furs, in small quantities only, found an outlet through Mexico. Nevertheless,

the efforts of Russia, England, and the United States, to establish trading-posts in the south, met with fierce opposition. The first attempt of the Hudson's Bay Company to invade California was before 1830, the valleys of the Sacramento and San Joaquin having at an early date attracted the attention of McLoughlin. A party sent to the assistance of the American trader Jedidiah Smith, who, on crossing from Salt Lake in 1827-8, had been roughly handled by the Indians and had lost a convoy of furs, penetrated as far as the Umpqua. A second expedition, under Ogden, reached the Sacramento River, and in 1835 the company established a post at the junction of the Sacramento and Jesus Maria. A few years served to exhaust the furs of these outlying districts, and, with the desire to reach still further southward, a collision with Mexico became inevitable. At this contingency, Douglas was sent in charge of a party to treat with the Mexican governor. Sailing from Fort Vancouver, December 3rd, 1840, on the ship *Columbia*, with a crew of thirty-six and a cargo of miscellaneous goods, he cast anchor at Monterey on New Year's Day, 1841. The design of the voyage was largely political, but the crew had been increased by stockmen who were to drive northward a supply of cattle. The negotiations with the governor lasted until January 19th. Douglas undertook to check the operations of the company in the Tulare and outlying valleys, and in return

obtained a temporary relaxation of the law which confined the coastwise trade to Mexican bottoms, together with the important right for the company to trade in California by express sanction of the government. Fifty cents, it was agreed, should be paid by the company for each beaver skin taken. San Francisco was immediately visited with a view to an establishment, not without friction with rival traders; and Douglas was back in Fort Vancouver by the following May. Rae, the son-in-law of McLoughlin, was recalled from the Stikine and appointed to the new post, which was situated on Yerba Buena Cove, in the Bay of San Francisco. Simpson, then on his famous voyage around the world, and McLoughlin as chief factor, visited the post soon after. For two years the record of the company's transactions was the history of San Francisco, and its servants made up almost the entire population. With the interior a steady trade in supplies sprang up. But the scale of profits from the first was below the expectation of the company. Rae fell ill, and in 1845 committed suicide. Forbes took over the control; but the governor had already decided, against the judgment of McLoughlin, to abandon the post. The end came in 1846, when the company sold the establishment at Yerba Buena and retired forever from San Francisco Bay.

These vigorous efforts of the company in the outlying regions of the department were accompanied

by developments in the immediate neighbourhood of Fort Vancouver which were of even greater importance. The agreement with the Russians relative to the supplying of provisions had been fraught with far-reaching consequences. From the first, McLoughlin, in spite of prejudice to the contrary, had recognized the agricultural possibilities of Oregon. The mild and equable climate and the depth and richness of the soil tempted a diversity and luxuriance of growth that invited the most unwilling to husbandry. In the open spaces about Fort Vancouver axe and plough were set to work, and corn and live-stock reared. Sheep were brought from California, hogs from the Sandwich Islands, and cattle from Ross. Soon a flour mill worked by oxen was set up. Grist and sawmills followed on the Willamette. Horse breeding for the brigades became extensive. By 1835, some thirty-five hundred feet of lumber were being sawn daily; while the yield of grain was annually several thousands of bushels, and the number of animals constantly on hand several hundreds. By these activities the company was saved the expense of bringing supplies through the mountains or around Cape Horn. The growing of grain was still a mere auxiliary to the trade in peltries, and while it remained so the inherent incompatibility of the two was not apparent. In a land of abundance, however, the supply soon exceeded the local demand. Flour and lumber from the Columbia began to seek a market in the Pacific

Islands. Salmon was shipped to Boston and London. With the Russian treaty, and the stimulus which it immediately gave to farming on the Columbia, this new phase was accentuated. The first intimation had been given, to those who could understand, of the final destiny of the region. Fur-trading and settled industry cannot live together. The company knew this full well. But, as it could not alter the decree of nature, its primary concern in the situation was one of organization merely—the keeping of the two divisions of its activity separate, now that the industrial branch gave promise of attaining large proportions.

To have charge of the important commercial and agricultural interests of the company, a separate body was deemed necessary. The formation of a cattle association by some settlers on the Willamette pointed the way ; and in 1838-9, McLoughlin obtained the sanction of the directors to the organization of the Puget Sound Agricultural Company. The new undertaking was brought into being under the immediate auspices of the Hudson's Bay Company, which furnished nearly all the original shareholders. It was officered from the staff of the parent body ; and it was expressly forbidden to deal in furs. On the other hand the Hudson's Bay Company handed over all its cattle, sheep, horses and farming implements to it and renounced husbandry forever in Oregon. The rich and level region which lay about Nisqually and between Puget Sound and

the headwaters of the Cowlitz, a branch of the Columbia which joins the latter about fifty miles from the ocean, offered a favourable field for the rearing of flocks and herds and the production of wool, hides and tallow. Farms were also opened on the Willamette. McLoughlin was appointed the first manager; skilled farmers and shepherds were brought from Canada and England ; and the company was finally inaugurated in 1840, with a capital of £200,000 in £100 shares. Of this capital, however, no more than £16,160 were found to have been paid up at the time the company's affairs were finally settled.

It would seem that the enterprise suffered almost from the start from a variety of opposing circumstances. Into the history of its chequered career it is unnecessary here to enter, lying as the period does some years in advance of the time at present under discussion. The adoption of the 49th parallel as the international boundary, in 1846, under circumstances to be explained further on, was a blow from which the company never attempted to recover. Its men deserted for the free lands of the homesteader; the natives destroyed its stock ; while the technical differences between " possessions " and " possessory rights " under the boundary treaty, were a source of perpetual dispute between the companies and the United States. An offer was finally made to sell all rights and titles to the United States for $1,000,000. This was not accepted, and the friction continued

Again, in 1860, it was intimated, through the British ambassador at Washington, that the sum of $500,000 would be accepted by Great Britain on behalf of the companies, and would release the United States from all engagements under the treaty. The company, however, maintained its position until the year 1867, hoping that by continuing in business, though at a loss, it would make good its case against the United States. In the year 1864, a commission was appointed by which the various claims were at last determined. Those of the Hudson's Bay Company were settled for $450,000; those of the Puget Sound Agricultural Company, for $200,000. Although the treaty was concluded in 1863, the award was not made until 1869. It was discovered that the latter body was indebted to the parent company in the sum of £25,000, and that except at intervals it had not paid a profit to the shareholders. The highest dividend declared was ten per cent., and this was continued for five years only, 1848-53. The last dividend paid was in 1854; it amounted to five per cent. The Hudson's Bay Company had an interest as purchaser in one thousand three hundred and eighty-six shares issued at par. In 1853, the company claimed one hundred and sixty-seven thousand acres at Nisqually, eighty thousand acres of which were prairie land. At Cowlitz, it claimed three thousand six hundred acres. In 1856, according to Tolmie, it had seven hundred and forty fenced at Nisqually.

McLoughlin, the first manager of the Puget Sound Agricultural Company, was succeeded on his retirement by Douglas, who also severed his connection with the company in the year 1859, upon his acceptance of the governorship of the Colonies of Vancouver Island and British Columbia

One incident in connection with the agricultural operations of the company may be noted in passing. In 1829, when the soil about Fort Vancouver was first upturned, a fearful epidemic of fever and ague broke out The whites suffered severely, but the Indians fell by thousands.[1] Typhoid, whooping-cough and measles soon after made their first appearance. In 1833 a hospital which had been erected on the Columbia had from two to three hundred cases as its usual number.

Over many stirring events that had their centre in Fort Vancouver, during the period in which it dominated the life of the coast, this summary must pass in silence The narration might be made to include several daring expeditions into forest and wilderness, such, for example, as that which Work led in 1834 far into the wilds of Oregon, past the headwaters of the Willamette, to the buffalo country of the Missouri; or that of Ermatinger in 1841 to the Sacramento; or that which founded in 1832 Fort Umpqua on the route between Fort Vancouver and San Francisco Bay—almost the only post attempted by the company for purposes of general

[1] See appendix "J"

trade south of the Columbia. Much space, too, might be given to the internal development of the company, and to the life that sprang up on the Columbia, which under McLoughlin was perhaps more striking than that in any other part of the company's domain. But the tree had no sooner achieved vigorous growth than it withered before the changed conditions which came with the advent of the agriculturist from the United States. To the important series of events that ended in the permanent establishment of the United States in Oregon, involving the settlement of the boundary between British and American territory, the extinction of the fur trade between the Columbia and the 49th parallel, and the removal of the company's headquarters from Fort Vancouver to Victoria, the rest of this chapter will be devoted. As before, Douglas was the close spectator, if not the actual director, of almost every move that was taken, having risen to the rank of chief trader in 1832 and of chief factor in 1840, and becoming in later years the forefront of the opposition offered by the English company to what it soon had to acknowledge was the decree of fate.

Prior to 1830, the first to cross the Rockies from the United States to Oregon, since the days of the Astorians, was Jedidiah Smith, who, with a band of fellow trappers, entered the Snake River country in 1825. Since the War of 1812, it should be explained, Astoria had been in the possession of

the United States under an arrangement with Great Britain by which the country from the Mexican frontier for an indeterminate distance northward was held in joint sovereignty. More concerning this arrangement will appear later on. From that time forward the possibility of the settlement of Oregon by agriculturists had been debated from time to time in congress ; but the awful perils of the journey overland and the conflicting information as to the value of the country itself led to no active result. Meanwhile, as we know, McLoughlin had installed the rule of the Hudson's Bay Company at Fort Vancouver and had taken virtual possession of the territory north and south. Smith was a lieutenant of the Rocky Mountain Fur Company, which the enterprise of the trader Ashley had made famous in the great interior of the continent, and which was the first to re-establish commercial communications between the United States and the territories west of the Rocky Mountains. Since the dissolution of the Pacific Fur Company the trade of the Upper Mississippi and the Missouri had been carried on by the North American Fur Company, at the head of which Astor remained, while in 1822 the Columbia Fur Company was formed, for operation in the same field, from recruits from the North West Company who were dissatisfied with the terms of the amalgamation of 1821. Smith, after crossing twice to the Pacific and ranging throughout Northern California, was killed by Indians in

1829, but not before he had led the first train of waggons from the east to the base of the Rocky Mountains. Sporadic expeditions followed under the command of Pilcher of the North American Company, Pattie of a Missouri concern, and others to whom these operations acted as a spur ; but until Bonneville and Wyeth came, direct collision with the Hudson's Bay Company was avoided. Smith in fact, as has been noted, owed his fortune, almost his life, on one occasion, to the English company, and gratitude may have found a place even in the breasts of warring fur traders. Bonneville, a Frenchman by birth and a captain of the United States army, having obtained in 1831 a furlough of two years, led a band of one hundred men and twenty waggons from the Missouri to the Columbia, where he spent two years in unsuccessful contention with rival enterprises, and returned having lost all. The expeditions of Wyeth of Massachusetts, made about the same time as that of Bonneville, were conceived in more serious vein, but met with scarcely greater success. Two posts were founded but were almost immediately driven out by the competition of the Hudson's Bay Company. Kelly, a Boston school teacher and an enthusiast in religion and politics, had the merit of attracting attention to Oregon by an extravagant scheme of colonization, in attempting to realize which he passed through extreme hardships in California and was rescued in the end from his suffering by the Hudson's Bay

Company, against which, however, he continued to entertain to the last an implacable hatred. Unsettled in mind as he was, Kelly was nevertheless the first to declare the feasibility of overland emigration from the United States to the Pacific, and, in writings poured forth for over a quarter of a century, to induce ultimately some trial of the undertaking which was to prove the true solution of the country's future.

By sea, during the year 1829, the ships *Convoy* and *Owyhee*, both of Boston, attempted to open trade with the natives of the Columbia. After a year's stay on the coast, the vessels took their departure and were seen in these waters no more. The *Owyhee* was reputed to have brought the first peach trees planted in Oregon and to have carried thence the first Columbia salmon to reach the Boston markets.

But the most potent factor in the permanent settlement of Oregon was the coming of the missionaries. The period was the third decade of the century. The movement had its origin in an incident, striking as it was touching. About the time of Wyeth's first expedition, there had appeared at St. Louis five Indians of the Nez Percés tribe who, having heard of the white man's God and His book, had come to ask that men be sent to teach their people concerning them. The story of their quest found its way into the press and was re-echoed throughout the churches of the land. To

one Jason Lee, a Methodist preacher, the call came as from Macedonia of old. With his nephew Daniel Lee and three lay brethren, he joined the second expedition of Wyeth which was at the moment embarking on its perilous march. In July 1834, Lee preached his first sermon in Oregon. With McLoughlin's aid, he planted his first mission on the Willamette, where a few retired servants of the company had already, by permission, established themselves and were employed chiefly in herding cattle. The mission soon became the nucleus of a permanent colony drawing recruits continuously from beyond the mountains. It was the first settlement of United States citizens on the Columbia having other than a commercial object in view. Before another year had elapsed, Lee was followed by the Presbyterian missionaries Parker and Whitman, the latter being joined by his wife. Spaulding and Gray came in 1836. The tribes of the Upper Columbia were now evangelized, Whitman settling in the valley of the Walla Walla and Spaulding in the Nez Percés country, and still further knowledge of the country was distributed in the Eastern States. Whitman, especially, from the moment of his arrival in Oregon, was untiring in his agitation for the inclusion of the country in the United States territory; and his establishment among the Cayuses soon formed a gateway through the mountains for the straggling lines of the settlers, which from this time forward, as a result largely of his efforts, began to

flow in ever-increasing numbers from the east to the Columbia. Whitman's famous ride from Oregon to Washington over the snow, in 1843, that he might superintend the immigration of the following year, is the most stirring deed of the whole movement. He returned with a thousand people. Schools for the education of the natives were opened ; and in 1839 a printing press was set up at Walla Walla on which were struck off the first sheets ever printed on the Pacific slope of America north of Mexico. The Jesuit missionaries, who came in 1838 from Canada, penetrated throughout the region, but had little effect on immigration.

To notice in detail the various steps by which the intermittent bands of settlers attracted by the missionaries to Oregon swelled into a great national movement ending in the occupation of the country by the United States, would be beyond the scope of the present chapter. Disconnected and unimportant at first, the different strands were in a measure gathered into a self-conscious whole in 1837, with the formation in the United States of the first societies for the promotion of emigration to Oregon. From that time forward the inflow was continuous, gathering volume with time. Perhaps no better view of the varied nature of the movement and of the manner in which its different constituents were intermingled, is obtainable than that presented by the following extracts from a document prepared by McLoughlin himself :

"This year," he writes, with reference to 1836, "the people in the Willamette formed a party and went by sea with Mr. Slacum to California for cattle, and returned in 1837 with two hundred and fifty head. In 1836, the Rev. Mr. Leslie and family, accompanied by the Rev. Mr. Perkins, another single man, and a single woman, came by sea to reinforce the Methodist Mission. In 1837 a bachelor and five single women also came by sea to reinforce the Methodist Mission; and three Presbyterian ministers came across land with their families, while their supplies came by sea. Two of these missionaries settled in the vicinity of Colville, the other in the Nez Percés country. In 1838, two Roman Catholic missionaries came from Canada. This year the Rev. Mr. Griffin of the Presbyterian Church, with his wife, came across land from the States by way of the Snake country. There came with him also a layman of the name of Munger, and his wife . . . . In 1839 a party left the state of Illinois, headed by Mr. Farnham, with the intention of exploring the country and reporting to their countrymen who had sent them. Four only reached this place. Three remained, Mr. Farnham returning to the States by sea and publishing an account of his travels. Messrs. Geiger and Johnson came this year, sent, as they said, by people in the States to examine the country and report. Johnson left by sea and never returned. Geiger went as far as California and returned here by land . . . . In 1840,

the Rev. Mr. Clark of the Presbyterian Church with his wife, and two laymen with their wives, came across land on the self-supporting system, but, as their predecessors, they failed, and are now settled on the Willamette. In 1840, the Rev. Mr. Jason Lee, who had gone in 1838 across land to the United States, returned by sea in the *Lausanne*, Capt. Spaulding, with a reinforcement of fifty-two persons, ministers and laymen, women and children, for the Methodist Mission, and a large supply of goods with which the Methodist Mission opened a sale shop. In 1841, the American exploring squadron, under Captain Wilkes, surveyed the Columbia River from the entrance to the Cascades, and sent a party across land from Puget Sound to Colville and Walla Walla, and another from Vancouver to California. At the same time the *Thomas Perkins*, Captain Varney, of Boston, entered the Columbia River for the purpose of trade. . . .

"In the spring, the Rev. Father De Smet of the Society of Jesus came to Vancouver from the Flat Head country where the year before he had established a mission from St. Louis. He came for supplies, with which he returned to his mission. In August, the Rev. Messrs. Langlois and Bolduc came by sea. In the month of September, one hundred and thirty-seven men, women, and children arrived from the States. They came with their waggons to Fort Hall, and thence packed their

effects on horses and drove their cattle. . . . In the fall, eight hundred and seventy-five men, women, and children came from the States by the same route as last year, bringing one thousand three hundred head of cattle. These came to The Dalles, on the Columbia River, with their waggons, drove their cattle over the Cascades by the same route as those of last year to the Willamette, and when the road was blocked by snow proceeded along the north bank of the Columbia to Vancouver, where they crossed the river to the Willamette, bringing down their wives, children, and property, on rafts, in canoes which they hired from the Indians, and in boats belonging to the Hudson's Bay Company, lent them by me. . . . . The Rev. Father Deros [Demers] of the Society of Jesus, came this year with two other fathers of the same society and three laymen and established a mission in the Colville district. Lieutenant Fremont, of the United States service, came with a party to examine the country. After purchasing supplies from the Hudson's Bay Company, he rejoined his party at The Dalles, and proceeded across land to California. In 1844, the immigrants amounted to one thousand four hundred and seventy-five men, women and children. They came by the same route and were assisted by me with the loan of boats, as their predecessors of last year. . . . . The Belgian brig, *Indefatigable*, also anchored there. She was the only vessel that

hitherto came under that flag, and brought the Rev. Father De Smet, with four fathers of the Society of Jesus, and five Belgian nuns of the Society of Sisters of Our Lady. The fathers came to reinforce their mission in the interior in the Flat Head country and to establish others, and the nuns to build a convent and open a school for young females in the Willamette."

Data for ascertaining the numbers that came across the plains to Oregon, from the year 1840 until the fixing of the international boundary, are incomplete and unsatisfactory. It has been estimated that at the close of 1841 there were in the neighbourhood of four hundred citizens of the United States in Oregon. For 1842, the estimates range, on good authority, from one hundred and five to one hundred and thirty-seven immigrants; while in the following year not less than eight hundred and seventy-five to one thousand came into the country. The number fell to seven hundred in 1844, but rose to three thousand in 1845, during the period that immediately preceded the final settlement of the controversy between Great Britain and the United States concerning the boundary. In 1846, the movement again fell off, this time to about one thousand three hundred and fifty.

The climax of the movement, in a political sense, came in 1844. From the time of the missionaries, the influx had taken on the characteristics of a

great national propaganda for the annexation of Oregon to the United States. The settler conveyed a clearer title to the soil than the fur trader; the settler, therefore, under the existing conditions was a patriot as well. Of the intricacies of the debate between Great Britain and the United States concerning the division of Oregon, some review will be given later; it is sufficient here to advert to the political significance of the immigration movement and to the fact that this significance was understood by every one who took part in it. By 1844, enough strength had been gathered for a definite declaration of policy on the spot. Political organization of some sort had, moreover, become expedient. A provisional government was accordingly erected on the Willamette, representative entirely of the American element—for the British held aloof—and established on the understanding that it would exist only until the United States extended its jurisdiction to the country. It had an executive of three and a legislature of eight. It passed several laws; but the bowie knife and pistol remained the most effective engines in bringing delinquents to justice. For two years the unique experiment was continued, until the treaty of 1846 erected Oregon into a territory of the American union.

A word may be added with regard to the course observed by the Hudson's Bay Company towards the settlers from the United States. It was indeed a difficult situation; on the one hand, suffering men

and women, the terrible passage of the plains having left nearly all the earlier settlers in a state of destitution and defencelessness; on the other, the loss of the country to the trade. Yet there can be no doubt that to missionaries and immigrants alike the attitude of the company was one of kindness and hospitality. How much of this was due to McLoughlin is a question hard to answer. The significance of the influx was never misunderstood; and if upon McLoughlin the bitterness of the losing battle fell, the fact remains that when Douglas succeeded to his place no change in policy followed. Perhaps it was then too late; though in any event the movement was irresistible from the first. To rival traders, of course, no quarter was given; they were fought with every weapon which the wealth and long experience of the company had placed in its hand, and with unvarying success. Ingratitude on the part of those who had received its bounty is hard to account for. Yet it is a fact that the ill-will which McLoughlin incurred from the company for befriending the settlers, excused as it might be by the heavy losses sustained through the policy which he had adopted, was more than equalled by the hatred with which he was pursued by some of those whom he had rescued from death in its most terrible forms, whom he had fed, clothed, and supplied with the means of obtaining a livelihood, and for whom he risked his own future

with the company. Political passion alone can account for this perversion. A year before the Oregon boundary had been finally determined, McLoughlin, the picturesque and admirable, the "great white eagle" of the Pacific slope, had been forced from his command; and Douglas, more rigid in his obedience, though no more able, as it proved, to stem the tide, ruled in his stead.

Such, in outline, was the nature of the movement which, by peopling the country south of the Columbia with a race that tilled the soil, drove out the hunter and the trapper, its discoverer and first occupant. In this way was solved the vexed problem of sovereignty in Oregon. Thenceforward the vast hiatus between the Alleghanies and the Rockies was bridged by the tie of a common nationality at either end; and the foot of the republic was planted firmly once and for all on the shores of the Pacific. With the year 1846, the British frontier was moved back to the 49th parallel, except for the portion of Vancouver Island which lay below that line and for the possessory rights which the Hudson's Bay Company and others retained in the Columbia valley, Britain having maintained throughout that the Columbia formed the proper boundary between the countries. Fort Vancouver remained until 1849 as a post of the company; but the glory had departed. Coming events had cast their shadow before; and the removal of the boundary did not find the company unprepared. Three

years before the final settlement, a fort had been established within the shelter of the new lines, to inherit the prestige of Vancouver as the company's emporium on the Pacific, and to form the nucleus of the new political and social life that was to spring up with the definite determination of the national frontier. This was Victoria on Vancouver Island, founded by James Douglas in 1843. The event and its immediate results were of such importance, both to the fur trade and the country, as to merit a chapter to themselves. Before approaching this part of the subject, however, it will be of interest to describe more fully that famous controversy between Great Britain and the United States concerning the Oregon boundary, some further reference to which is necessary in immediate connection with the foregoing, and of which the establishment of Victoria, though forestalling it in point of time, was largely in the nature of a result.

CHAPTER V

THE OREGON BOUNDARY

THE fundamental elements of the memorable dispute between Great Britain and the United States concerning the Oregon boundary have been set forth incidentally in previous chapters. It will be well, however, before discussing the negotiations which brought the contest to an end, to recall in rapid review the more crucial of these early events, the significance of which bulked large in the arguments of later times and combined with much that was new to determine the ultimate destiny of the Pacific coast.

It has been described how, in the first half of the sixteenth century, Spain alone of the European nations—partly by virtue of the Papal bull, partly in overweening power—followed a career of conquest in the New World. How she was brought in due course to the Pacific, and how, after the plunder of Mexico and Peru, her sailors buffeted their way along the coast to the 50th parallel of latitude, was also dealt with. If such discoveries conveyed a title to the soil, Spain's sole disturber in these early days was the Englishman Francis Drake, whose descent upon New Albion was the less vexatious because, like the Spaniards themselves, he was gone almost as soon as he had come. As a matter of fact,

the coast above the 42nd parallel was still to all intents an undiscovered country when, more than a hundred and sixty years after Drake and Viscaino, the expeditions of Perez, Heceta and Quadra first gave to Spain what might be called a title to the shore south of the 58th parallel. Cook's voyage, the discoveries of the Russians, and the rise of the British trade in sea-otter, have been referred to at some length in the foregoing. The result of the advent of Great Britain in these waters was the collision at Nootka, the final settlement of which pricked forever the bubble of Spain's pretensions to exclusive ownership in the Pacific, the coast being thrown open to the vessels of both nations for trade, navigation and settlement, while each was given the right of access to the stations of the other. Vancouver's careful survey, the investigations of Quimper, and the discovery of the Columbia by Gray followed, Gray's exploit becoming in later years the strongest argument with which the United States contested her claim to Oregon. Soon after, the epoch-making expedition of Mackenzie overland opened the way to the first permanent settlement west of the Rocky Mountains. Of the part played by American navigators, who for a decade after 1800 monopolized the trade of the coast, and the momentous series of incidents that grouped themselves about the Louisiana purchase, including the expedition of Lewis and Clark and the founding of Astoria, full

mention has already been made. With this review by way of brief reminder, the negotiations that led to the first formal understanding between Great Britain and the United States—the powers who in the process of time inherited the tangled skein of claim and counter-claim to Oregon—may be outlined from the beginning.

Upon the close of the War of 1812, it had been agreed[1] between Great Britain and the United States that territory taken by either nation in the course of the hostilities should be restored to its original owner. No allusion was made to the country west of the Rocky Mountains, nor were boundaries anywhere defined. Astoria, which had been purchased in 1813 by the North West Company from its founders, remained in the possession of the British traders. There had been features, however, in connection with the transfer of that famous post, which imparted to the transaction a significance out of the ordinary. It will be remembered that the sale was made by agents who, though employees of the American company, were British by birth and sentiment; that it took place in the expectation of the arrival of an overpowering British force; and that, almost immediately upon the consummation of the purchase, the British sloop of war *Raccoon* took possession of the post, over which the British flag was raised, the name being at the same time changed to Fort George. How much or how little

[1] By the Treaty of Ghent, December 24th, 1814.

of the contiguous territory attached to the fort was always an open question. The bearing of these incidents was not lost sight of in the United States. No definite action was taken, however, until 1817, when the right to be reinstated on a national basis at Astoria was formally put forward, on the ground that the circumstances attending the transfer of 1813 amounted virtually to belligerent capture, and that the restoration of the fort was therefore included in the treaty which closed the war. After a brief demurrer, the claim was admitted by Lord Castlereagh for England,—completely and unconditionally, it was afterwards urged by the United States, though probably in the first instance with the idea merely of acknowledging the right of the United States to be regarded as the party in possession while discussion of the title to the adjoining territory was in progress. It should be explained that by the prolonged inactivity of Spain, the absorption of Russia in her northern trade, and the elimination of France by the purchase of Louisiana, the United States had by this time divided with Great Britain the leading interest in the region. The American flag was accordingly raised again over the site of Astoria, though the English company remained in possession for several years longer. Herein, it may be said, was the beginning of that irritating controversy between Great Britain and the United States which, after so many years of disquietude tinged with bitterness,

ended in the loss to the former of a territory of singular value.

From the restitution of Astoria to the next stage of the proceedings was but a step. While the armed vessel despatched by the United States to take over the post was still upon the seas, a negotiation had been begun at London between plenipotentiaries of the two powers, for the adjustment of various matters left untouched by the Treaty of Ghent. Among these was the question of the claims of the respective countries to the territory west of the Rocky Mountains. The United States, it appeared, did not assert a perfect title to that region; but she insisted that her claim was at least good against that of Britain. Great Britain was no less inclined to consider her own rights as antedating those of any other power, at least in the country north of the Columbia. Messrs. Rush and Gallatin for the United States, and Messrs. Robinson and Goulburne for Great Britain, conducted the deliberations. There was an exchange of superficial argument, which did little more than confirm the situation established by the restoration of Astoria a few months previously. An agreement in which the deadlock that had now been reached stood fully revealed was at last arrived at, October 20th, 1818. Under its terms, neither nation was granted exclusive sovereignty in the region lying between the 42nd and 55th parallels; both, however, might trade or establish settlements

at unoccupied points; each was granted a rightful title to the posts it had already built; and either might interfere to protect its subjects in local quarrels. The agreement was limited to ten years. Both nations hoped, ere the period was ended, to strengthen their respective rights to possession: England by the actual occupancy of her fur traders; the United States by the inevitable expansion of the republic across the mountains, if, as was still in doubt, the Pacific Fur Company should not rise from its ashes. By both, therefore, the treaty was construed as a victory. Yet it settled nothing; it merely launched the question upon the uncertain sea of the future, to drift whithersoever the currents of chance might carry it.

With the year 1818, therefore, and the conclusion of the agreement above mentioned, the Oregon boundary question stood forth in clear-cut outline before the nations upon whom time had laid its solution. There was great ignorance, great indifference concerning it; but for the twenty-eight years of its troubled existence, though much that was new in argument was brought to bear from time to time, the issue itself remained unchanged. Great Britain held throughout that the boundary should follow the 49th parallel from the Rocky Mountains to the Columbia, descending the river thence to the sea; the United States claimed the entire coast from California to Alaska as of right, but were at all times willing to agree that the boundary should

follow the 49th parallel to the Pacific. Only the more important phases of the question and of the arguments employed as it passed through the mazes of diplomacy can be touched upon.[1]

On February 22nd, 1819, the Florida treaty was signed between the United States and Spain The treaty, apart from its main object, dealt largely with the boundary between Louisiana and Spanish territory. This, it was agreed, should follow the 42nd parallel from the headwaters of the Arkansas to the Pacific. North of that line the Spanish title to the coast was vested in the United States—a provision that led to much searching of records later, in the endeavour to determine the value of the title thus transferred. Soon after, negotiations as to spheres of influence were begun by the United States with Russia, whose arm had stretched as far south as the California coast. As a result, a treaty was obtained in 1824 which fixed the line of 54° 40′ as the limit beyond which neither nation was to found establishments without permission of the other. In the year following, as has been already noted, a similar boundary was agreed upon by Russia and Great Britain, with this difference, that the claim of the latter to the interior country extending northward to the Arctic Ocean was at the same time admitted. Some attempt at a joint conference between the three powers had previously failed, in part through

[1] See appendix "K"

emotions raised by the promulgation of the Monroe doctrine. Meanwhile negotiations between Great Britain and the United States were re-opened in London, the situation being in this way cleared for the renewal of the argument as between these countries alone. Spain and Russia, the remaining powers who, at one time or other, had held claims to varying portions of the coast, were now finally eliminated from the controversy.

For over three years the recrudescence of the question in this simplified form provoked a vigour of discussion that was exceeded only during the closing stages of the dispute, still some eighteen years in the future. Great Britain was represented by Huskisson and Stratford Canning, the United States by Rush. A claim to exclusive ownership by the latter, based on the Spanish transfer, the discoveries of Gray, and the founding of Astoria, and backed by a reference to the Monroe doctrine, led to an immediate impasse. A debate in congress soon after, in which a proposal was made to occupy the Columbia by a military force, had the result of bringing for the first time unequivocally into light the latent feeling of the British cabinet with regard to Oregon, as a territory not worth fighting for, though not to be relinquished in a manner repugnant to British pride. Unfortunately, the knowledge of this soon passed to the American camp. When the negotiations were resumed in 1826, Gallatin succeeding Rush, and Addington

taking the place of Canning, the revelation had undoubted weight in obtaining an arrangement which virtually perpetuated the agreement of 1818. For both parties a compromise of the sort might again be interpreted as a victory. Great Britain retained the advantages of actual possession, which since the War of 1812 had been complete, and the prospective profits of the fur trade. The United States might still reflect with satisfaction that the settler, who alone would confer a permanent interest in the land, was far more likely to come from the republic than from England. No loss of dignity was sustained on either side; and to break an amicable and profitable arrangement for a mere title of possession would, as Greenhow remarks, have been foolish as well as unrighteous. The knowledge and acumen displayed by both parties in the notes exchanged during the closing stages of the negotiations were well-nigh perfect, being in strong contrast with the slip-shod information that did service in the protocols of eight years previously. They were, of course, of no avail in modifying the result, except in one particular: the arrangement of 1827 was made subject to abrogation at any time by either party upon twelve months' notice. The matter thereupon relapsed for over ten years longer into a state of calm.

But if parliament, congress, and the diplomatic corps heard nothing of the controversy during that interval, the question was far from slumbering. By

the irresistible march of events, it had in fact been brought before the tribunal whose judgment was to be final. The Oregon boundary had at last become a popular question. Reference has been already made to that stream of settlement which, beginning soon after 1830, had, within the decade and a half which followed, sent thousands of American farmers into the valleys south of the Columbia. The United States, with the knowledge gained in 1827, saw in this the fulfilment of her expectation. There was no need now of armed occupation; every settler was a soldier, and his wife and family part of an American garrison. Much matter was silently gathered, in the way of settlers' petitions and reports of missionaries and traders, against the day of final reckoning. A little later, congress was able to add to this the call of the provisional government erected in Oregon in the anticipation of an immediate extension of United States sovereignty. Popular murmurings grew meanwhile into a shout. Pamphlets and books were multiplied apace. With skilful repression, however, the issue was excluded from the negotiations held with Lord Ashburton in 1842 which had for subject the north-eastern boundary. But with that victory won, the flood of passion was no longer stemmed. Tyler's conciliatory language in 1843, served but as fuel to the flame. The exchange of views in 1844 and later, between the British minister Pakenham and Messrs. Calhoun and Buchanan for the United States, revealed only a

modification of the previous arguments, except for the altered tone of the American proposals. The Baltimore platform of 1844, on which Polk was elected president, declared the title of the United States to the "whole of Oregon" to be "clear and unquestionable," and "fifty-four forty or fight" became the shibboleth of half a nation. The "whole of Oregon," it may be repeated, meant the entire region between California and Alaska, three quarters of which had been discovered and explored, and were now held, by the British fur traders. Popular clamour alone forced a claim of this magnitude upon the government, which as the event proved, was ready enough to agree to a compromise. Polk as president, did what he was elected to do in the matter of Oregon. Arbitration was refused on the ground of the difficulty of securing an unbiassed tribunal in monarchical Europe. The chances of war were freely canvassed in both countries, and there was bluster on both sides. Moderate language, however, was at all times preserved in the official correspondence. In the end, a simple notice of the abrogation of the existing treaty was served upon England, who at once proposed the 49th parallel as the boundary from the mountains to the middle of the channel which divides Vancouver Island from the mainland, the line to run from that point southerly by the middle of the same channel to the Pacific. Clauses were added giving certain rights of navigation to Great

Britain on the Columbia, and safeguarding the property of the Hudson's Bay and Puget Sound Agricultural Companies in the territory south of the 49th degree. The suggestion was at once accepted by the United States. The boundary, it was found by the orators, was wonderfully adapted to the natural divisions of the two countries, parting the two great watersheds of the Fraser and the Columbia with the same accuracy that it divided, east of the mountains, the rivers flowing into Hudson Bay from those that fall into the Gulf of Mexico. It had, indeed, been part of Gallatin's argument in 1826-7 that the 49th parallel divided the disputed frontage on the Pacific into two nearly equal parts, whereas, if the Columbia were accepted as the boundary, less than one-third would accrue to the United States. Better, however, than its geographical excellence, appreciation of which can scarcely be looked for in Canada, the new boundary represented the peaceful solution of a long and trying difficulty, the arbitrament of which by war between two kindred peoples would have been an unspeakable calamity, however much it may be regretted that more of justice had not mingled with the terms of settlement.

Such, in the essentials, was the manner in which that famous controversy concerning the division of Oregon arose, raged, and was finally placed at rest. Its dust has long been laid; and there is no desire on any hand to disturb it. It is necessary, however,

in this place, to note, in addition to the foregoing, something of the matter as well as the manner of the contest, now that the smoke of it has rolled far off and the facts are as we may assume they will remain. The wealth, indeed the endless diffuseness, of the material has been remarked. It permits a perfect view of the opposing claims as they appeared to their exponents, and furnishes a comprehensive means of classifying those opinions according to the accepted principles of international usage.

Sovereignty over new territory may be acquired by a nation in five ways: by discovery; by settlement; by contiguity; by treaty; and by prescription. All acts upon which a claim to sovereignty may be based must, of course, be those of a government and not of unauthorized individuals.[1] The acquisition of territory is a grave act, imposing as a necessary consequence upon the state acquiring it the manifold duties of administration. Private persons cannot assume such responsibilities, and their discoveries, settlements or treaties confer no benefits and impose no obligations upon the state from which they have proceeded. In the light of these principles let us notice some of the claims of the several powers which at one time or other possessed an interest in Oregon.

Discovery (which may be grouped with settlement in this brief résumé) in itself does not convey a perfect title in international law. It is the first

[1] Gray was unauthorized, Vancouver was authorized.

step to a title—an "inchoate act of sovereignty;" but it must be followed by possession and settlement; and the settlement must be continuous and permanent. If occupation lapses for any reasonable length of time, the title lapses with it. As to the discovery of much of the north-west coast, Spain might undoubtedly claim that honour; and the establishment of Nootka was designed to confer the added right of possession and occupation. But it was never acknowledged that this single settlement could hold so vast a region, or that the voyages of Cook and others might not also rank as voyages of discovery. The convention of Nootka gave to England in 1790 equality with Spain in north-western America. That Gray and Lewis and Clark were the first to reach the lower waters of the Columbia was undeniable; as it was equally undeniable that the northern and principal branch was first seen by Thompson, and that Meares and Vancouver had preceded Gray on the coast, though they had not sighted the great river itself. The Britis posts of New Caledonia and Kootenay House (1807), on the upper river, preceded the founding of Astoria (1811). As to the question whether the operations of fur-trading associations, such as the North-West and Hudson's Bay Companies, constituted occupation in the sense recognized by international usage, the view in general of the United States was that they did not. Yet the establishment at Astoria was in no sense different to the posts of

the British companies, and the United States from the moment of the restoration sought to base on it a claim to the adjacent territory, notwithstanding the immediate protest of England that the settlement was an encroachment on British dominions.

The territory to which the post of a fur trader might constitute a claim would seem to depend upon the radius of influence exerted. The Russian settlement in California, for example, was never made the basis of a claim for territory. Moreover, Gray's ship was a trading and not a national vessel, and the first exploration of the lower Columbia, as distinct from its discovery, was made by Broughton, an Englishman. Astoria also, according to the British view, was a purely private enterprise, and its foundation not to be construed as occupation in a national sense. The Hudson's Bay Company, on the other hand, possessed at least a quasi-official existence, under royal charter and an assurance of protection from the British government. It exercised judicial functions in respect to civil and criminal processes over its servants, while the jurisdiction of the Canadian courts of law extended over the entire country coterminous with the limits of the company's franchise. It engaged in the cultivation of the soil before a single immigrant from the United States had planted foot in Oregon. Gallatin, who denied that any claim to sovereignty could arise out of the occupation of the country by mere fur-trading corporations established for the

purpose of traffic alone, admitted that the modest factory at Calcutta had grown into the British Empire of India, having an undisputed rule over hundreds of millions of people—in other words that the force of international law in this connection takes its colour largely from attendant circumstances. Such as it was, the British occupation of the Columbia, after the War of 1812, and especially after the amalgamation of the North West and Hudson's Bay Companies in 1821, was complete. During the decade after the restoration of Astoria, scarcely an American trader was seen in the country or on the coast, notwithstanding that in the meantime the introduction of steam vessels on the Mississippi and the Missouri had greatly improved facilities for communication. From 1813 until 1837, in fact, the quiet and almost exclusive use of the Columbia was enjoyed by Britain. Even in the final stages of the controversy the American settlements were entirely on the southern bank of the Columbia, while the British posts lay both north and south. At an early date, however, Great Britain threw away whatever benefits she might have won by reason of this occupation, when she placed herself on record as waiving any claim to exclusive sovereignty over any portion of the country between the Columbia and the 49th degree, and as standing simply for joint occupancy while the right to exclusive domain remained in abeyance. "The qualified rights which Great Britain now possesses

over the whole of the territory in question" wrote Huskisson and Addington in 1826, "embrace the right to navigate the waters of those countries, the right to settle in and over any part of them, and the right to freely trade with the inhabitants and occupiers of the same. It is fully admitted that the United States possesses the same rights, but beyond they possess none." The restoration of Astoria was not, according to Great Britain, in any sense a relinquishment of title in the surrounding territory. But the practical effect of the admission above was that the nation who first occupied the country with settlers should be entitled to exercise those rights of sovereignty which possession of this kind commonly bestows. How time fought the battle of the United States in this has been already shown.

Contiguity has been defined as of two kinds—perfect and imperfect. The first involves the right of a nation to exclude all others from a territory the command of which, though actually not within her boundaries, is essential to her convenience and security. It was not, of course, contended that a foreign settlement west of the Rocky Mountains would threaten the welfare of the Atlantic seaboard. The United States had no Pacific commerce to protect, and at no time prior to 1846 was the possession of Oregon essential to her safety or existence. The report of General Jesup to a select committee of congress in 1823, to the effect that the command of the Columbia was necessary for protection from

the tribes of the frontier, revealed even in its recommendations that the more immediate gain in contemplation was the dispossession of the British traders. The other title of contiguity has been defined as a preferable right to acquire lands, which, though they may be neither settled nor necessary for convenience or defence, are geographically one with the acquiring nation. In this connection it was urged that Oregon belonged more naturally to the United States than to any other power. From the earliest attempts at colonization in America, the whole breadth of the continent between certain parallels of latitude was ordinarily granted to colonies established only at points on the borders of the Atlantic. Moreover, it could not be doubted that, after 1835, Oregon and Texas offered the most natural outlet for the rapidly growing population of the United States, in view especially of the prevailing opinion that the adjoining central division of the continent offered no inducements to settlers. Nevertheless it should be borne in mind that even from the United States, Oregon, in the words of Calhoun, was distant more than thirteen thousand miles by sea, a voyage, in 1846, of six months, and more than two thousand miles by land, a march of one hundred and twenty days. That Louisiana originally extended to the Pacific was denied by Addington. But that the territory under dispute lay as much in the path of the British crossing from the Peace and Saskatchewan as of those who traded from

the Mississippi and Missouri was also insisted upon. As a matter of fact, the free navigation of the Columbia was in the early years essential to the maintenance of the British trading-posts in the interior, south as well as north of the 49th parallel, and was the basis of that vigorous attempt to bring the whole coast northward under British trade influence, the success of which has been described. Colonization from Britain or Canada was not for the time thought possible. The latter had no redundance of population, and to both more suitable fields lay closer at hand. At the very moment, in fact, the United States themselves were drawing steadily from Britain her surplus population in a stream that could not easily have been diverted to other channels.

Much was made in the course of the dispute of the bearing of various treaties upon the rights involved. The Treaty of Ghent, in its application to Astoria, has been already referred to. The conventions between Russia and England, and between Russia and the United States, also, need not be further mentioned. Debate raged fiercest about the Florida treaty of 1819. What was the nature of the title derived from Spain by that treaty? By the United States it was regarded as perfect against that of any other European power at the time of transfer. By England it was denied that Spain had any title whatever to convey in 1819. The explanation of this diversity of opinion dates back to the

Nootka convention and the war which broke out between England and Spain in 1796 and continued with only a short intermission until 1809. Granting that the Nootka convention admitted Great Britain to certain rights on the north-west coast, it was held by the United States that the convention was an instrument of a commercial nature merely, that the right then granted to England to found settlements did not involve the conveyance of sovereignty to any part of the region, and that in any other event the convention had been terminated by the subsequent wars. In 1819, according to this view, the United States fell heir to the original right of Spain to the exclusive ownership of the coast. To this the British rejoinder was that the convention was not a merely temporary or commercial concession; that it destroyed rather than implied the exclusive title of Spain; that the settlements permitted were quite compatible with local sovereignty; and in general that the title which Spain had failed to make good in 1790 and which Great Britain had successfully challenged at the moment of its greatest strength, could not now be revived simply because of an agreement with a third power, the more so that, for over a quarter of a century, it had fallen into complete disuse. After her formal abandonment of the coast in 1795, Spain's only right was one which she shared in common with England and the United States; the only right, therefore, that she could convey in 1819 was one which the latter al-

ready possessed. As to the Louisiana purchase, this was never successfully maintained as affecting boundaries west of the Rocky Mountains, unless as an argument from contiguity; moreover, Louisiana in 1790 belonged to Spain and was therefore included in the provisions of the Nootka convention and in the later considerations applying to the title of Spain.

Out of the right of contiguity, perfect and imperfect, it might be contended that the United States had evolved the last of the rights above mentioned—that of prescription. To prescription the application of the Monroe doctrine was akin. By the free and independent condition which the American continents had assumed, they were no longer, according to the Monroe doctrine, to be considered as subjects for colonization by European powers. But the future colonization of Oregon, it had been agreed, would determine the destiny of the region. So far as the doctrine applied to South America, which had recently cast off the yoke of Spain, Great Britain sympathized with its object and was prepared to support it. In the case of the Oregon question, however, it had the effect merely of rendering the British government much less disposed to concession, while tending to produce a union of views, approaching almost to a league, between Great Britain and Russia, which in the result proved of distinct disadvantage to the United States.

An effort to apply the cumulative principle to the arguments of the United States under the above

headings was made during the negotiations of 1827. If, separately, objection might be made to each, considered together they were believed to establish the American claim on a solid foundation. To this the reply was that the claims based on discovery, acquisition from Spain, and contiguity, were in many respects incompatible the one with the other, and could not, therefore, be united. If, for example, the title of Spain by first discovery, or that of France, as the original owner of Louisiana, were advanced, it was evident that one or other of these countries held the territory at the time of Gray's discoveries, and that the latter therefore could not be put forward as conferring a claim. If, however, the importance of Gray and the Astorians was emphasized, by so much were the Spanish or French titles diminished. The device of admitting imperfections in the several elements in order to give strength to the aggregate was, therefore, in the present case, of little avail. The United States, in counter reply to this, argued that, though in different hands the several claims would conflict one with the other, they supported each other when united in the same power.

Great Britain has been bitterly censured by a school of opinion in Canada for the loss of Oregon between the 49th parallel and the Columbia. The charge has this foundation: that it is possible to perceive how the country might have been

saved. It will be well, however, to be explicit on this point. In the final analysis, lack of knowledge of the value of Oregon, by inducing a perfectly natural but by no means logical apathy as to its political future, was probably the cause of the loss, if lost that may be called which was never held in undisputed possession. For lack of knowledge on the part of Great Britain there was abundant excuse. The whole of the western continent which she held, disputed and undisputed alike, was in the grasp of men whose guiding purpose was to perpetuate the mystery in which the land had been wrapped from the beginning. England's attitude throughout the controversy was simply that of champion to her fur traders whose outposts had been threatened with invasion, to which in process of time was added the consideration of national pride. Moreover her ignorance of the country must be considered relatively. It was at least no greater than that of the United States until a comparatively late stage of the dispute. Jefferson almost alone in the early days of the republic showed real knowledge of the importance of the west, or at least of the diplomacy by which it was to be won. As late as 1844, when the controversy had entered its most acrimonious phase, Greenhow, the historiographer of congress, one of the most learned authorities on the subject, appraised as practically valueless the territory in dispute, though he wrote the most able of the treatises put forth in the behalf of the United

States to prove the latter's title to the land in question. Gallatin, the American commissioner to England in 1826-7, shared the common view. In the early debates in congress opinions were freely expressed as to the worthlessness of the country. Webster had none of the popular enthusiasm concerning Oregon, at a time when the name was a slogan thoughout the United States. The mass of the people before 1840 knew little and cared less about Oregon. The ignorance of Great Britain, therefore, is not remarkable. To the British nation at large, Oregon was no more than a name. A writer in the *Edinburgh Review* of July 1845 reflected the best informed public sentiment of his day when he said: "It seems probable that in a few years all that formerly gave life to the country, both the hunter and the prey, will become extinct, and their place will be supplied by a thin white and half-breed population, scattered along the few fertile valleys, supported by the pasture instead of by the chase, and gradually degenerating into the barbarism, far more offensive than that of the savage, which degrades the backwoodsman." Again: "The great error of all parties has been the importance attached to Oregon." And again: "It is much that the real worthlessness of the country has been established. All that any prudent Englishman or American can wish is, that the controversy should be speedily and harmoniously settled." Still more remarkable were the conclusions

of the same writer as to the future of Oregon: "However the political questions between England and America as to the ownership of Oregon may be decided, Oregon will never be colonized overland from the United States . . . . Whoever is to be the future owner of Oregon, its people will come from Europe."

Let it be said, moreover, that once the question assumed practical importance, England displayed both keenness of interest and firmness of purpose in handling it. That she had recourse in 1846 to every resort short of war is undeniable. But the truth is, her point of view had been mistaken from the first, and the battle was lost before ever it came to be fought. Diplomacy, as it proved, could avail nothing in dealing with an issue of this nature once it had arisen. Three opportunities had been presented when, by a decisive stroke, the region might have been won: in the settlement of the Nootka affair; in the treaty which closed the War of 1812; and in 1818. Each time a compromise was accepted in the interest of a "speedy and harmonious" settlement and in the mistaken trust that the future would strengthen the hands of Great Britain; each time the door was left open for further controversy; each time the renewal of the dispute found the position of Great Britain weakened. In striking contrast was the subtle and far-seeing diplomacy of the United States, which from the first permitted no ignorance of the present and

actual to preclude appreciation of the future and potential. When the time for final settlement arrived, there had been added to this general principle of acquisition for its own sake all the weight of established industrial interests, of an awakened public opinion, and of an inflamed and prejudiced national spirit. Popular clamour alone was responsible for the claim to the "whole of Oregon,"—a claim that became serious only when party politics seized upon it as an issue. England who had bred and fostered Cook, Vancouver and Mackenzie, was, in this view, nothing less than a usurper throughout the coast; while the Hudson's Bay Company, which had saved the first American settlers from starvation and murder by the Indians, was but a greedy and inhuman monopoly, the willing tool of a government that was now attempting the crime of grand larceny from the United States. Such was the temper of the American press and people when the issue was for the last time joined and lost. But the loss should bear the date, not of 1846, but of that earlier time when the first failure was recorded either to appreciate the splendid destiny which awaited the region, or to grasp the means which would have brought it permanently under British influence.

The foregoing brief review of the facts and principles involved in this historic controversy will at least have shown that the issues, obscured as they

had been by clouds of witnesses and a mass of conflicting testimony in which personal interests and national prejudices were alike intermingled, proved simple enough, once the final stage had been reached and the circumstances had forced the countries to an agreement. By these circumstances and not by any theories of international jurisprudence, was the fate of Oregon decided. In 1840 the question was as far from solution as ever. The arguments from history and law had been exhausted long ago. No exclusive right could be established by either party as the case then stood. The superior advantages which Great Britain at one time held, she had long since waived, and had been content to trust the future to its own developments. These had now matured. The great nation of the Atlantic seaboard was by every instinct of its origin and by every dictate of the policy in which its early steps had been directed, a nation of expansionists on this continent. From clearing to clearing, from settlement to settlement, from township to township, and at last from state to state, its inevitable way led westward. Even its missionaries were pioneers of empire. As Canaan became the land of Israel, so the United States possessed Oregon. It was of infinitely greater value to her than to Great Britain in 1846. No president or government, it would be safe to say, could have consented then to less than was received by the United States, no matter what rights of others were involved. War only could

have maintained Great Britain in Oregon. Of a war, after serious thought, she considered Oregon not worth the price. Thus ended it.

CHAPTER VI

VICTORIA

THE year 1843 was a turning point in the history of the north-west coast. Fate had by that time unequivocally declared that the north and not the Columbia must be the final abode of the fur trade and the nation whose protection it enjoyed. The company read the signs of the times, and had begun to prepare for the inevitable. Long before the boundary had been named, the desirability of shifting the chief seat of the trade northward had become manifest. It was impossible to secure peltries on the Columbia in the face of increasing settlement; and for some time past a point of strategic and commercial advantage, beyond reach of the conditions that were rendering Vancouver untenable, had been diligently sought by the company.

There were many reasons why Camosun,[1] the Indian village on the site of which the city of Victoria now stands, should have attracted the attention of the traders. Esquimalt,[2] where a more commodious harbour exists, might have been deemed more suitable for a city; it was not, how-

[1] Spelled "Camosack" by Douglas, who gives the native interpretation as "rush of waters." By others the name is derived from Camass, a plant with an edible root, greatly in favour with the Indians and abundant in the vicinity of Victoria.

[2] See appendix "L"

ever, a city that the company thought to establish, but a post for the prosecution of the fur trade. As early as 1837, McNeill had explored the southern end of Vancouver Island and had found an excellent harbour and fine open country, apparently well adapted for tillage and pasturage, along the shore. Simpson himself, during the voyage previously referred to, had noted the fertile soil, the abundance of timber, and the equable climate of Camosun, and had predicted that the place would become in time "the most valuable section of the coast above California." Douglas, finally, in 1842, had made a careful examination of the locality and had reported favourably. The agricultural possibilities of the region, which rendered the vicinity of Fort Vancouver of such value, were insisted upon, the requirements of the Puget Sound Company having now to be consulted no less than those of the Hudson's Bay Company proper. On the whole, the directorate in London had unrivalled information at its command before resolving on any change. McLoughlin, Douglas, Work, Ogden, Tolmie, Finlayson, Anderson and McNeill formed a body of men whose local knowledge might he regarded as perfect; while at home the company's management included several to whom every project in the councils of the nation was well-known. Fortified with the approval of both London and Vancouver, official sanction to the establishment of a fort at Camosun was soon given. The new post would be

near the ocean, yet protected from it. A great island lay to the northward; and to a huge continent it formed the natural entrepôt. It stood at a crossways of the waters, to the west being the Strait of Juan de Fuca, to the south Puget Sound, and to the north the Gulf of Georgia. It commanded the first good harbour north of San Francisco, the entrance to the Columbia having proved difficult even to the ships of that period. Some idea, too, of the trade possibilities of Alaska, the Northern Interior, the Orient, the Pacific Islands, and South America, doubtless crossed the minds of the men who sat in the council chamber of Lime Street, London. Moreover, it was a point of great natural beauty, Victoria taking rank to-day as the most picturesque of all the cities of the Pacific shore.

The expedition which was dispatched to establish the post set sail from Fort Vancouver on March 1st, 1843. It consisted of fifteen men, and it was under the command of James Douglas. Nisqually and the Cowlitz country were visited for supplies; and at New Dungeness the Indians were notified of the intended action of the company. Crossing Fuca Strait, the party cast anchor within Shoal Point on March 14th. According to tradition, the spot on which Douglas first landed was knee-deep in clover at the time, from which it received the name by which it is still known—Clover Point. The native Songhees, who had a stockade at the head of the harbour, showed surprise, but no hostility, sur-

rounding the steamship *Beaver*, which had brought the party, with a swarm of welcoming canoes.

Considerations of detail at once engaged the attention of Douglas. The selection of a site and the obtaining of a supply of timber for the projected fort were the first steps necessary. The question of an anchorage apparently decided the former, the post being placed where the present Court House of Victoria stands on Bastion Square. A steamer of the draught of the *Beaver* found no difficulty, in 1843, in casting anchor off the site of the present wharf of the Hudson's Bay Company. By March 16th, the men were already at work squaring timbers and digging wells. The natives, pleased at the prospect of trade, were given employment making pickets, each picket to be twenty-two feet long and three feet in circumference, axes and other tools being lent them for the purpose and payment being made at the rate of one blanket for forty pickets. These preliminaries under way, Douglas steamed northward in April to Forts Taku and McLoughlin, which it had been decided at headquarters to abandon, and the crews of which were needed to augment the scanty force at Fort Camosun.

With Douglas to Victoria came Bolduc, the Jesuit missionary, reputed the first priest to set foot on Vancouver Island. The natives proved ready converts; over twelve hundred Songhees, Clallams and Cowichans were baptised after the first mass,

which was celebrated in a chapel of pine branches and boat's canvas on March 19th, 1843. Bolduc afterwards passed to Whidby Island, where, though conversions were numerous, attempts to reform the habits of the savages met with indifferent success. By April 3rd, the missionary was back at Nisqually.

It was on the first of June that the *Beaver* returned from her northern voyage. Taku and McLoughlin had been dismantled, and with the reinforcements thus obtained some fifty men were available for the work at Camosun. Within three months, in the prevailing pleasant weather, the stockade, one hundred and fifty yards square and eighteen feet in height, with blockhouse or bastion (thirty feet high and armed with nine-pounders, blunderbusses and cutlasses), at each corner, was finished. As finally completed, the stores, five in number, together with the post-office, smithy, carpenter shops, sleeping quarters for the men, officers' quarters, chapel, powder magazine, etc., were all within the stockade. For the sake of economy, the fort was built without nails or spikes, wooden pegs alone being used. The site selected was an open glade of oak trees, in the midst of the dense forest which ran down to the harbour and inlet. Flocks of Indians from Vancouver Island, the neighbouring archipelago, and the mainland, attentively watched proceedings, but in the face of con-

stant vigilance offered no opposition beyond acts of petty theft. Later they too began to erect lodges along the harbour bank. The schooner *Cadboro* arrived with further supplies from Fort Vancouver while the work was in progress; and by October, Douglas, regarding the establishment as capable of self-defence, set sail with the *Beaver* and *Cadboro* for the Columbia. Charles Ross, who had been in charge at Fort McLoughlin, was left as senior officer, with Roderick Finlayson, transferred from Fort Simpson, second in command. Finlayson, whose duties included the supervision of construction operations, thus became the first builder of houses on Vancouver Island.

A word apart should surely be spared in honour of those staunch and trim little vessels, the *Cadboro* and the *Beaver*, whose doings have already figured prominently in this narrative. For nearly forty years their names appear in almost every record of the company's seaward movements. Every island and canal of that dangerous labyrinth of waters which lies, a by-word to sailors, between Sitka and Fort Vancouver, was known to their captains as a book. The schooner *Cadboro*, seventy-two tons burden, had been built at Rye in 1824. Before her destruction in 1862, every soul but one of the thirty servants of the company whom she brought on her maiden voyage from England had been buried. With her picked crew of thirty-five and her six guns, she did

the work of many men in the spread of civilization on the Pacific. The *Beaver*, which had the unique distinction of being the first steamship to navigate the great western ocean, was also built for the company in Great Britain. In August 1835, with her escort, the *Columbia*, she was pointed for Cape Horn, rounding which she buffeted her way northward for four months under sail, her machinery not being installed until she reached Fort Vancouver. Built of live oak and teak, with engines the best of their day, for forty-three years of hard and constant usage she plied the thousand bays and estuaries of the coast. She was still sound in every timber in spite of adventures innumerable with rock and reef when, on a dark night in 1888, she met her doom at the entrance to Burrard Inlet.

In the spring of 1844, Ross, who was in charge at Fort Camosun, died, and Finlayson was appointed in his stead, the son of Ross being sent as second in command. Of Scottish birth, Finlayson had joined the company in 1837, and had seen hard service at Taku, Stikine and Simpson. Shrewd and kindly, he had commended himself to Douglas by his rigid devotion to duty. His narrative of the events that culminated in the founding of Fort Camosun is among the most valuable of the contemporary documents that have survived and are available relative to the history of the north-west coast during the first half of the nineteenth century.

Events proceeded smoothly at Camosun for some time after the accession of Finlayson. The first serious test of the defences of the post arose through the restlessness of the neighbouring Indians. Directly opposite the fort, at a distance of four hundred yards, lay the village of the Songhees, under their chief Tsilalthach. Communication was constant between the points by means of boats. A wandering band of Cowichans under Tsoughilam were encamped near by. The cattle of the fur-traders feeding in the open spaces about the fort, proved too great a temptation to the savages and a number were slaughtered and eaten. The company had not made the animals, they averred, nor did it own the fields that fattened them. A demand for payment provoked at first surprise, then anger, ending in a united but ineffectual attack upon the fort. Finlayson contented himself in reply with revealing the deadly powers of the company's nine-pounders by blowing to pieces a lodge from which he had previously taken care to remove the occupants. The effect was instantaneous; on the following day full payment for the cattle was made. Shortly after, danger from fire having been caused in the vicinity of the fort, Finlayson compelled the Indians, not without angry parleyings, to remove to the other side of the harbour, thus originating the present Indian reserve at Victoria. In the spring of 1845, again, a party of Skagits from the mainland coming to trade at the fort were waylaid by

the Songhees at Clover Point and their goods stolen. Whereupon Finlayson again interfered and compelled the restitution of the goods. A demonstration of the powers of the great gun being a second time asked for, Finlayson directed that a canoe be placed in the harbour opposite the bastion. Pointing the canon at the object, he fired, the ball passing through and bounding to the opposite shore. The lesson had its effect.

Next in importance to relations with the Indians in the early annals of the post was the birth and progress of its shipping. It was in the spring of 1845 that the first vessel consigned to Fort Victoria[1] direct from England arrived in the harbour. This was the bark *Vancouver* belonging to the company. With the *Cowlitz* and the *Columbia* she made yearly voyages thereafter from London, bringing outfits for a twelvemonth in advance. In the same year also occurred the visit of the frigate *America* with Captain the Hon. John Gordon, brother of the Earl of Aberdeen, then Prime Minister of England, on board. Gordon's mission was to examine into and report on the value of Oregon, including Vancouver Island, the controversy concerning which with the United States was at the moment entering upon its final stage. An incident related by Finlayson of his visitor's ill-success at salmon fishing gave currency

[1] The native title was retained until 1845, the change being first to "Albert" and later in the same year to "Victoria."

to the popular fiction that Oregon was lost to Britain because the sockeye would not rise to a fly. That Gordon's prejudices, however, and the unfavourable impression carried away by his party concerning the Columbia valley did not assist the home authorities in attaching a proper importance to the country, may be assumed. From the year 1845, also, the American whalers of the North Pacific touched occasionally at Victoria for supplies, until the Hawaiian Islands were found to afford a more convenient port of call. About the same time, while the cry "fifty-four forty or fight," was still reëchoing through the United States and excitement ran high in Great Britain as well, H.M.S. *Constance*, with five hundred men and officers, arrived at Esquimalt. Finlayson seized the opportunity for a military display, for the sake of the effect upon the Indians. The frigate *Fisguard* also visited Victoria in the same year and exercised her men on shore with a similar object in view. Two surveying ships, the *Herald* and *Pandora* came in the following season, and re-mapped the Straits of Juan de Fuca, the harbours of Esquimalt and Victoria, the Canal de Haro and other waters. These and other ships of war despatched for the protection of national rights were supplied with beef and vegetables from the farms of the company. Meanwhile the general trade, which during the preceding twenty years had converged upon the Columbia and Fort Vancouver, came gradually more and more to centre at Victoria.

FARMING OPERATIONS

The farming operations of the company had engaged attention from the first. Even before the fort itself had been completed, a number of men were set to work at clearing the surrounding land for the raising of vegetables and cereals. Wooden implements alone were available the first year, an example of the thrift of Douglas, and the corn was trodden out by cattle in the barn. Some of the younger natives were employed at the work, proving useful ox-drivers. They were paid, as usual, in goods. Horses and cattle were imported later from Nisqually, by the ever active *Beaver* and *Cadboro*, and a farm of several hundred acres was eventually opened in the immediate vicinity of Victoria. In all, the company's farms on the island were three in number; the Fort Farm as it was called, on the level space where the city now stands; Beckley Farm, in the neighbourhood of James Bay; and the North Dairy Farm, which was situated inland. The latter, as the name would imply, was devoted chiefly to dairying which would seem to have received special attention; three dairies, each with seventy milch cows, producing seventy kegs of butter each in a season, being in full working order within four years of the beginning of operations. Oats, barley, pease and potatoes were also raised; and forty bushels of wheat to the acre was a not uncommon yield. The price obtained for the latter from the Russians was four shillings and twopence per bushel, paid by bills on St. Petersburg. A large

wooden building, long to be seen at the company's wharf at Victoria, was used as a granary, wherein the grain from Fort Vancouver, Puget Sound and Langley, as well as that grown on the island itself, was held for shipment to Sitka. Both Russian and British vessels were engaged in the traffic. The profitableness of the agricultural venture on Vancouver Island was assured throughout by the abundant supply and cheap price of labour. The natural increase of the cattle, moreover, was such that it was soon found impossible to herd them, many escaping into the woods, where they were found years afterwards by hunters in the interior of the island.

In 1848, the brigades from the northern interior, instead of descending to the Columbia by way of Kamloops and Okanagan as usual, followed the more direct route of the Fraser Valley to Langley. A year before the settlement of the Oregon boundary, Anderson, who was then in charge at Alexandria, had foreseen the necessity of the change and had carefully explored the country between Kamloops and the Lower Fraser, notwithstanding the stupendous obstacles interposed by nature. Fort Yale was founded as a result in 1848 and Fort Hope a short time later. For the decade which followed these events, the main route to the interior lay from Langley to Fort Hope by water, thence by trail across the defile of the Coquihalla River to the Thompson.

The completion of this arrangement marks all but the end of Fort Vancouver. With the levying of American duties, its days were numbered. The great McLoughlin had passed from the scene, the victim, as has already been described, of forces which he had neither the will nor the power to resist. To curb his influence, a board, of which Douglas and Ogden were the other members, had been appointed some time earlier for the management of the Western Department. The end came in 1846 when his resignation followed a report by a commission sent by the British government to make inquiry into the military conditions of Oregon, with a mandate from the company as well. Douglas thereafter became the senior officer of the Western Department, McKay being given the supervision of the northern posts which till then had been under the immediate eye of Douglas. McLoughlin passed to Oregon City, then rising at the falls of the Willamette. Sorrow ended his days. He had renounced, after the quarrel with the company, his allegiance to Great Britain. But his new countrymen would have none of him. His lands were taken from him by the United States and restitution deferred until he himself was beyond caring. He was the patriarch, as Whitman was the martyr, of Oregon. There was a time when a word from McLoughlin would have hurled the American immigrant across the mountains and left to the United States no other alternative but a conquest by arms.

Yet who would name him traitor? His humanity lifts him above common men.

With the year 1849 an important period is reached in the history of Victoria and British Columbia. With the events of that year and their immediate results, the city enlarges into a colony. Briefly, these events included the final removal of the chief emporium of the company from Fort Vancouver to Victoria; the discovery of gold in California; the opening of the first coal mines on Vancouver Island; the acquisition of Vancouver Island by the Hudson's Bay Company; the conversion of the island into a Crown colony; and the appointment of a governor from England. To each of these developments in turn a word must be given.

The abandonment of Fort Vancouver was marked by the removal of Douglas with his wife and family to Victoria. They came by the ship *Cadboro*, having crossed by horses from the Columbia to Puget Sound. The family at first took up its abode in the fort, in the absence of a separate residence for the chief factor. Finlayson, on the assumption by Douglas of the chief command, was made the head accountant for the Western Department, a position which he held until 1862. Another notable arrival of the year was the Rev. R. J. Staines, of Trinity Hall, Cambridge, who came as

chaplain to the company, and whose eccentricities, tribulations and death form a strange mixture of the ridiculous and the tragic. Helmcken, the future speaker of the legislature and son-in-law of Douglas, was a second arrival of the same year. Victoria henceforth became the centre of the Hudson's Bay Company's interests west of the Rocky Mountains.

Victoria being after San Francisco almost the only point on the north Pacific coast from which supplies could be obtained, the effect of the gold discoveries of 1848-9 in California on the life of the place was immediate. Prices rose to an exorbitant degree at San Francisco and the miners employed the winter months, when work on the placers was impossible, in the search for a cheaper market. Finlayson mistook the first contingent for pirates. Their mission explained, however, they were allowed to purchase such goods as were less immediately required for the company's trade at the rate of eleven dollars per ounce for their gold. Gold in its native state had never before been seen by Finlayson, and the transaction gave him serious doubts until he had communicated with headquarters. The reply received was that more goods would be sent for the new demand. The traffic however, was not without its disadvantages, as the excitement caused among the company's employees seriously disorganized the service, a large number leaving for the diggings, while the pay of others had to be increased in order to in-

duce them to remain. Indians were employed to replace the stragglers. Finlayson himself was offered a thousand dollars a month to take charge of a store in San Francisco, an offer which he declined, for the reason that though his salary was but one hundred pounds per annum from the company, he was under an engagement to give twelve months' notice before quitting the service.

In 1849, the development of the first coal mine in British Columbia was begun. Outcroppings of the mineral had been noted years before in several localities; at Beaver Harbour, where Fort Rupert was erected after the abandonment of Fort McLoughlin, considerable quantities had been known to exist. Fort Rupert was uncompleted when Michael Muir, a Scottish miner, with his wife, a family of sons and daughters, and a small party of miners, was sent by the company to establish workings on the deposits. Upon sinking a shaft ninety feet, however, Muir declared the seam too small to be workable, and, complications with the Indians arising, the miners left for California. The Muir shaft was continued later to a depth of one hundred and twenty-five feet, but without favourable result. Additional and better mining machinery arrived in 1851, but more promising deposits having been disclosed by the Indians at Nanaimo, the plant was removed thither, and the beginning of what was destined to be one of the most important industries

of the Pacific slope was made. The famous Douglas seam was located in 1852. In the same year, Fort Nanaimo was erected in the neighbourhood. Two thousand tons were shipped in the following year, bringing eleven dollars per ton at Nanaimo, and twenty-eight at San Francisco. Coal outcroppings were subsequently discovered at various points on the island, on the contiguous coast of the mainland and on the Queen Charlotte Islands, but the fields in the vicinity of Nanaimo were the only ones on the coast that became of commercial value. The Muir family, it would seem, retired eventually from the service of the company, as the names of five of them are attached to a petition of the independent settlers which was presented to the first governor of the colony on his departure for England.

There remains to be dealt with the highly important series of incidents that group themselves about the acquisition of Vancouver Island by the Hudson's Bay Company, the first attempt at colonization, and the first and tentative establishment of civil government. The three divisions of the subject are inextricably interwoven.

In 1838, the license which had been granted to the company in 1821 to trade, to the exclusion of all other British subjects, in the territory owned by Great Britain north and west of Canada and the United States, was renewed, with certain important additions, for a further period of twenty-one years.

The additions bound the company among other things to enforce the execution of criminal processes, and to frame rules and regulations for the moral and religious improvement of the Indians. To the government the right to erect colonies or provinces within the territories included in the grant was retained, together with the privilege of applying thereto any form of civil government, independent of the company, which might be deemed proper. Though this license, as will be seen, did not expire until 1859, the question as to the policy to be adopted by the government with regard to the colonizing of the country arose at a much earlier date. Almost immediately upon the arrangement of the international boundary, the example afforded by events on the Columbia had its effect in England. Immigrants were pouring into that favoured region, towns were springing into being, and industry was expanding with a speed that was full of meaning to the overcrowded population of Great Britain. From the company's standpoint also, the moment was an anxious one. There seemed every prospect that the wave of settlement which had driven the trade north of the 49th parallel would follow it even further. The company's conduct in Rupert's land, moreover, had recently come in for severe criticism. Yet concessions must be obtained if the monopoly was to be saved with any semblance of its old-time power. Closely in touch as the directorate was with the official mind of Great

Britain, it was realized that the time for action was before the settler had appeared and the subject had achieved prominence. It was shrewdly perceived also that the company would best attain its object, not by opposing colonization, which was now seen to be inevitable, but by securing control of the colonizing process so that it might retard or direct it at pleasure. The government was, therefore, approached with a proposal on the part of the company to undertake the rule and colonization of its various territories in North America. The magnitude of the suggestion apparently startled the cabinet, which, with the recent troubles of Lord Selkirk's colony on the Red River in mind, had now clear knowledge of the relations which the settler bore to the fur trader. The negotiations were suspended, in something not unlike alarm; whereupon the company adroitly diminished its proposals to include only the territory west of the Rocky Mountains. Failing that, even Vancouver Island alone, it was intimated, would be accepted. Colonization, the company affirmed as a part of its suggestion, would be assisted in every way possible, and all moneys received for lands or minerals would be applied to the improvement of the country. The question was considered by the government with reference solely to Vancouver Island. Parliament debated the proposal, Gladstone being among those who spoke against it. In the end the government declared itself in favour of concluding an arrange-

ment with the company. No other agency had the necessary capital, organization and experience for the undertaking, and the company already possessed the exclusive right of trade in the Indian territory for eleven years longer. It was willing, moreover, to vest the appointment of a governor in the Crown. After protracted negotiations as to terms, the grant was consummated on January 13th, 1849. Vancouver Island, with the royalties of its seas and mines, was handed over to the Hudson's Bay Company, in perpetuity, subject only to the domination of the Crown, and to a rental of seven shillings payable on the first day of each year. The company was to settle a colony of British subjects within five years; to sell the land at a reasonable price, retaining only ten per cent. of the proceeds and applying the balance to improvements; to reserve such lands as might be necessary for naval stations and government establishments; to report every two years with regard to the number of colonists settled and the acreage of lands sold; and to defray the expenses of all civil and military establishments, except during hostilities between Great Britain and a foreign power. The grant, it was stipulated, would be forfeited if no settlement were effected within five years. The imperial government reserved the right to recover the island, at the expiry of the company's exclusive license, by payment of the sum actually expended by the company in colonization.

The wisdom of the grant was widely questioned. Undoubtedly the desire of the company was to control rather than to promote the settlement of the coast. This was shown at once by the prospectus and advertisement which it published on the conclusion of the arrangement. A reasonable price for land, it appeared, was, in the company's view, one pound per acre. Moreover, for every hundred acres so purchased the buyer was to convey at his own expense three families or six single settlers to the colony.

Needless to say, these conditions placed a hopeless burden on settlement. It is not to be thought that they were ever intended to do otherwise. Colonization was incompatible with the fur trade. As a business matter, the agreement was very profitable. It continued to the company the use of the country; and vested rights were created for which, in the end, the traders were well paid.

Even apart from the above, the methods which were adopted to induce immigration to the new colony were worthy of censure. It would not be fair to say that the company did not want settlers on Vancouver Island: a certain number were needed to preserve the semblance of good faith; moreover, servants for the Puget Sound Agricultural Company were a necessity. In the representations made, however, to the few who were rich enough to undertake the company's terms, and to those sent out as employees, an impression was conveyed

as to the state of affairs in the colony, which, if not actually contrary to fact, led the people to expect entirely different conditions from those which prevailed. The directors in London, of course, knew little of the life of the colony; while the officials on the ground had been graduated in a school of hardship which prevented them from appreciating the feelings of men and women transplanted from the garden of civilization to an unbroken wilderness. The situation of the American settler in Oregon, where land without money and almost without conditions was to be had, did not tend by comparison to increase satisfaction. The California gold fields, too, exercised their lure and did much to retard the settlement of the British colony.

The first settler on Vancouver Island under the terms of the agreement was W. Colquhoun Grant. Hearing of the project, he had sold his commission in an English cavalry regiment, and with a party of eight persons, fitted out at his own expense, arrived on the island. After careful examination of the country, he chose a location at the head of Sooke Inlet, twenty miles north-west of Victoria. After two years he tired of the life, and leased his farm to the labourers he had brought out. Under their tenure the place fell into neglect, and was subsequently sold to the Muir family. Grant's purpose, according to Finlayson, was to form a purely Scottish settlement; the plan, it was even said, included

a Gaelic schoolmaster and a Highland piper. James Cooper was a second early arrival who was to figure for a longer time in the history of the colony. Landing in 1851, he brought from England a small iron vessel in sections, to be put together at Victoria. He had previously been in the service of the company as commander of a vessel between London and Fort Vancouver, and his object now was to carry on an independent trade, for which his experience had well fitted him. In 1852 he launched a scheme for buying cranberries from the natives of the Fraser River for the San Francisco market, where under the prevailing conditions he could obtain as high as one dollar per gallon for the produce. The Hudson's Bay Company, however, had no mind for enterprises of this nature. Cooper had no sooner opened his traffic than Douglas sent instructions to Fort Langley to buy all the cranberries the Indians offered at a price beyond the reach of other traders. Cooper thereupon took up land at Metchosin and farmed three hundred acres for some years in partnership with one Thomas Blenkhorn.

Other early arrivals were eight coal miners and two labourers on the *Harpooner* in June 1849; eight emigrants on the bark *Norman Morrison* in 1850; and one hundred and twenty hired labourers on the *Tory* in June 1851. A number of the latter were sent to Fort Rupert to work in the coal mines.

By this time, there were, according to contemporary reports, some seven independent settlers in the vicinity of Victoria, three of whom had previously been in the company's service. Victoria itself was laid out in streets in 1852, though where the city now stands was still forest with only occasional spaces of cultivated ground. In addition to the fort, only twelve houses stood within the surveyed limits. At the end of 1853, it was estimated that, apart from seventeen thousand natives, there was on the island a total population of four hundred and fifty persons of all nationalities, three hundred of whom were divided between Victoria and Sooke, with one hundred and twenty-five at Nanaimo and the rest at Fort Rupert. Up to the same date, nineteen thousand eight hundred and seven acres had been applied for, but of this no less than ten thousand one hundred and seventy-two acres had been claimed by the Hudson's Bay Company, and two thousand three hundred and seventy-four acres by the Puget Sound Agricultural Company. At the beginning of 1854, according to Bancroft, not more than five hundred acres at the most were under cultivation on the island, and of this all but thirty acres at Sooke and ten acres at Metchosin were under the immediate management of the company.

From the outset, open quarrels were incessant between the settlers and the company. The first and leading cause lay in the conditions under which

the colonists were placed upon the land, the onerous nature of which has been already indicated. The land itself, the more so as the company had appropriated the best of it, was not inviting. Fear of the Indians pressed constantly, and there was loud complaint over the lack of properly constituted courts of justice. The company's time-honoured method of barter was hateful and unjust. It was a grievance, too, that the island was not included in the reciprocity treaty between Canada and the United States. Besides these matters, which were of general application, a multitude of individual woes filled the cup to overflowing. A single example will show the lengths to which the strife proceeded.

Three miles distant from the fort, Captain Langford, from whom Langford Plains and Langford Lake received their names, worked on the lands of the Puget Sound Company as one of four bailiffs. He had been a Kentish farmer, and for a time an officer of the British army, but he was induced to enlist in the service of the Hudson's Bay Company, to open, as he supposed, a farm on Vancouver Island. On his arrival he found to his disappointment that he had bound himself to the Puget Sound Agricultural Company, and that the quarters allotted to him consisted of but two log huts, of a single room each—one for himself and his family, the other for his men. Langford was a distant relative of Blanshard, the first governor

of the colony, and he was not slow to complain. The colonial office was soon deluged with indictments of the Hudson's Bay Company and its officials, and though the statements of Langford do not appear to have received full credence in England, their matter is of interest as throwing light on the relations in general of the company with the settlers. Langford's bitterest grievance was that the colonial surveyor had informed him when applying for a certain tract that the land in question was already sold to Dallas, the son-in-law of Douglas. But apparently the land at the time had not been sold, and Langford was therefore mulcted of a prospective profit. He further complained that although he had applied to Douglas for an immediate inquiry into the matter, the erring official had been permitted to leave the colony for England without explanation. In addition, Langford had been hardly used in court in the matter of a libel which had been printed concerning him, and he inveighed against the fitness of David Cameron, a linen draper and brother-in-law to Douglas, who had been appointed the first chief-justice of the colony. The report of Douglas as governor on the subject of Langford's charges had at least the effect of eliciting an expression of confidence on the part of the home authorities in the various officials of the colony. That Langford's onslaught upon Cameron had not the sympathy of the entire community is

shown by a document which was presented by a number of the leading proprietors of the island to the governor, in which a protest is entered against the petition requesting the annulment of his appointment.

Some interesting particulars having an important bearing on the same feature in the history of the island appear in the minutes of evidence taken before a select committee of the British House of Commons which was appointed in 1853 to consider the state of the British possessions in North America then under the administration of the Hudson's Bay Company. One of the recommendations made by the committee after due deliberation was that the connection of the company with Vancouver Island should be terminated and that provision should be made for the ultimate extension of the colony over the adjoining mainland west of the Rocky Mountains. The report was dated July 31st, 1857, and the recommendations were given effect in the following year, a step considerably hastened by the discovery of gold on the Thompson and Fraser Rivers. It was alleged by the committee as the basis of its findings, that the population under the company's régime had decreased instead of increasing; that the price placed upon the land was much too high; that the company's monopoly of the trade of the country had stifled all competition; that settlers having no money were compelled to barter with the

company for goods at exorbitant prices; that no proper protection was afforded from the Indians, there being only one constable and no military force on the island; that there was no restriction on the sale of liquors; that no means were provided for transmitting money to England, or for banking or for the marketing of farm produce; that the company had done nothing to civilize the Indians, though due credit was given to the humanity of its policy in this connection; that no survey of lands had been made except of those belonging to the company's employees; that the company was directly responsible for the slow progress of settlement; that the company evaded the export of goods other than its own in its ships from England; that settlers had been in specified cases induced to come to Vancouver Island as servants under misrepresentations; and that in general the powerful influence of the Hudson's Bay Company was in favour throughout of its own interests and opposed to those of free and independent land-holders. Added to this arraignment of social and political conditions in the island, was a mass of useful and interesting information concerning its climatic and natural resources. With regard to its future, the witnesses examined by the committee were with one accord sanguine, provided that a suitable form of government were granted and a favourable opportunity offered for the process of industrial development.

The history of the early years of settlement on Vancouver Island, apart from the above, had few features of interest. The first governor of the colony, Richard Blanshard, was appointed in 1849. It is difficult to discuss his tenure of office seriously. An independent governor was not a part of the scheme which the company had in view. The directorate had, in fact, suggested Douglas for the position; but the nomination was discretely withdrawn on the intimation of the prime minister that at least the first governor of the colony should represent the Crown. Blanshard was accordingly accepted with equanimity by the company, as an instrument which might be used for a time and cast aside. The company, with or without the governor, was master of the situation. Blanshard had been educated as a barrister, and had had some previous experience in colonial administration. He was ambitious, and he accepted the office at its apparent value, undoubtedly without exact knowledge of its nature. Under the terms of the grant of Vancouver Island, the company was required to pay the expenses of all civil and military establishments during peace. Beyond this, however, Blanshard seems to have had no definite understanding. A thousand acres of land had been promised him by the home government; the promise, however, was construed by Douglas as applying only to lands for the governor's temporary use while holding office. On arriving at Vic-

toria on March 10th, 1850, Blanshard read the proclamation of his appointment to an audience composed of the officers of the ships which had brought him and the servants and officials of the company; but having no quarters allotted to him at the fort he was obliged almost immediately to return on board his vessel. Thereafter, for some time, the seat of government moved with the exigencies of the ship which bore the governor. The island was coasted and Fort Rupert and other points of interest visited. At Beaver Harbour, the coal workings, which were then engaging the attention of the company, were inspected, the judgment of Blanshard being unfavourable as to their success. The condition of the miners and natives having been investigated, the governor returned to Victoria. Without salary, without allowance for expenses, without clerical assistance of any kind, without evidence of the promise of the land he was to receive, without official residence, without the sympathy or coöperation of the officials of the company with whom he was speedily in open antagonism, without even duties to perform beyond the settlement of disputes between the settlers and the company, one course only was open—to resign. Before leaving he nominated a provisional government of three, consisting of Douglas, Cooper and Tod, and September 1st, 1851, saw his departure from Vancouver Island. The experiment of an independent governor had been tried and had failed.

A more cruelly treated officer of his rank it would be hard to find in the history of British colonial institutions.[1]

James Douglas was appointed governor of Vancouver Island in the place of Blanshard. No one outside of the company was available; and there were indeed few interests other than those of the corporation to render outside representation advisable. Until population became more numerous and industry more diversified, the machinery of government was, in truth, seldom needed. At most it served but to symbolize the supreme authority of the Crown. Meanwhile, the autocratic rule which Douglas in his capacity of governor and chief factor in one was able to enforce, was on the whole well suited to the conditions. A man more competent it would have been impossible to find. His knowledge of the country was unrivalled, his control of the officials and servants of the company absolute, and his influence with the Indians, whose goodwill was essential, almost unlimited. The situation was anomalous: from many points of view it was indefensible. But the time to end the domination of the company was not yet come,—did not, in fact, arrive till the discovery of gold on the Fraser gave an entirely new aspect to government and affairs in British Columbia.

[1] See appendix "M"

CHAPTER VII

VANCOUVER ISLAND

FROM 1851 until 1858 Douglas reigned as governor of Vancouver Island. He did indeed reign. He continued the council of advisers appointed by Blanshard, the name of Finlayson being added, but his position was none the less that of an almost undisputed sovereign.

The elements which had proved so discordant under Blanshard were now in harmony. Crown and company were virtually one, both having their centre in the governor. If the union wore an ominous look, it had at least been proved that an independent governor was, under existing conditions, impossible. For the moment the monopoly was all triumphant. Colonization came to a standstill. Even the renewal of the grant of the island for a further term of five years was achieved in 1854 with little difficulty, notwithstanding the vigorous protests of the few settlers who still found a voice.

Yet at the moment of its sturdiest growth the axe was already laid at the root of the tree. Apart from routine, only two incidents call for special mention during this period. The first of these was essentially antagonistic in idea to the supremacy of the company; and the second involved the immediate and utter ruin of the fur trade over a wide

area of the mainland. The events referred to were, respectively, the establishment of representative government in the colony, and discovery of gold on the Fraser River. The present chapter will be divided between these very important developments.

It was in 1856 that Vancouver Island took on for the first time the full status of a British colony.[1] The commission issued to Blanshard had provided for the summoning of a representative assembly; but for seven years Douglas with his council alone made shift to provide the scanty legislation which was needed by a community without independent population. Though the Crown had granted him this privilege, it was by the Crown that the first doubts were thrown on its validity. In due course it occurred to the colonial office that the establishment of a legislature on Vancouver Island was necessary, if for no other purpose than to confirm what had already been performed without its aid. It was urged, as an additional reason for the step, that in 1859 the relations of the company with the Crown must undergo revision, and that the future administration of the colony would be more easily provided for if the experiment of government by a house of representatives had been already made. Douglas was accordingly instructed to arrange forthwith for the dividing of the country into electoral districts, with a view to the election of a legislature, in accordance with the terms of his

[1] See appendix "N"

commission. Many practical suggestions as to the procedure to be followed and the nature of the constitution that would suit so small a community, were added by Mr. Labouchère, the colonial secretary of the day.

Consternation was apparently the first emotion raised in the breast of the company's leader by the determination of the home authorities. "It is not without feelings of dismay," wrote Douglas in reply, "that I contemplate the nature and amount of labour and responsibility which will be imposed upon me in the process of carrying out the instructions conveyed in your dispatch. Possessing a very slender knowledge of legislation, without legal advice or intelligent assistance of any kind, I approach the subject with diffidence, feeling, however, all the encouragement which the kindly promised assistance and support of Her Majesty's government is calculated to inspire." Making a virtue of necessity, he summoned at once a special meeting of his council to consider the dubious problem that confronted him, the result being that it was resolved to divide the island into four electoral districts, returning seven members in all, the property qualification of members to be the ownership of freehold estate to the value of three hundred pounds or more, while that of the voters remained as fixed by the governor's commission—namely, twenty acres or more of freehold land. "There will be a difficulty in finding properly qualified repre-

sentatives," wrote Douglas to Labouchère on the conclusion of these arrangements, "and I fear that our early attempts at legislation will make a sorry figure, though at all events they will have the effect you contemplate of removing all doubts as to the validity of our local enactments."

The proclamation which gave effect to the above was issued on June 16th, 1856. The four electoral districts into which the colony had been divided were—Victoria, to be represented by three members; Esquimalt, to be represented by two; Nanaimo, to be represented by one; and Sooke to be represented by one. Elections duly followed. In Victoria five candidates appeared; but in the other constituencies, so few or indifferent were the electors, the seats went without a contest. The members of the first assembly were as follows:—J. D. Pemberton, Joseph Yates, and E. E. Langford for Victoria; Thomas Skinner and J. S. Helmcken for Esquimalt; John Muir for Sooke and John E. Kennedy for Nanaimo.

The House thus chosen had no sooner met than it encountered a difficulty that threatened for a time to be insurmountable. "J. S. Helmcken has been elected Speaker of the House," wrote Douglas under date of August 20th, "but nothing further has been done in consequence of objections having been raised as to the validity of the election in one instance, and as to the property qualifications in two cases, making three out of the seven members against whom peti-

tions have been sent in, leaving only three members and the Speaker at liberty to act, and that number is insufficient to form a committee of inquiry. . . . One of the petitions is got up merely for party purposes, and if that were withdrawn there would be four members and the Speaker who might proceed to the affairs of the House. In the United States the practice is in such cases for the governor to grant certificates of qualification to a majority of the members, who then proceed to constitute the House, but I am not certain that such a course would be in harmony with the English law. However, if the House would appeal to me on the subject I would have recourse to that expedient." From a later despatch it appears that the governor was spared such summary action. Langford, the representative for Victoria, was the member lacking the necessary qualifications, and he was replaced at once by Joseph William McKay unopposed.

The legislature met for the first time on August 12th, 1856. The inaugural speech of the governor on that occasion is a noteworthy document. Apart from the illustration it offers of what Douglas conceived to be the status of the young colony, it throws a strong light on the various problems which beset the early years of the little community. After congratulating the council and House on the occasion, "an event fraught with consequences of the utmost importance to the present and future inhabitants, and remarkable as the first instance of

representative institutions being granted in the infancy of a British colony," the address proceeded:

"The history and actual position of this colony are marked by many other remarkable circumstances. Called into existence by an Act of the supreme government, immediately after the discovery of gold in California, it has maintained an arduous and incessant struggle with the disorganizing effects on labour of that discovery. Remote from every other British settlement, with its commerce trammelled, and met by restrictive duties on every side, its trade and resources remain undeveloped. Self-supporting, and defraying all the expenses of its own government, it presents a striking contrast to every other colony in the British Empire, and like the native pines of its storm-beaten promontories, it has acquired a slow but hardy growth. Its future progress must, under Providence, in a great measure depend on the intelligence, industry and enterprise of its inhabitants, and upon the legislative wisdom of this assembly."

The address paused at this point to refer to the aid and support which the executive power might in the future expect to derive from the "local experience and knowledge of the wishes of the people and the wants of the country," which the members possessed. It then resumed:

"Gentlemen, I am happy to inform you that Her Majesty's government continues to express the most lively interest in the progress and welfare of this

colony. Negotiations are now pending with the government of the United States, which may probably terminate in an extension of the reciprocity treaty to Vancouver Island. To show the commercial advantages connected with that treaty I will just mention that an import duty of £30 is levied on every £100 worth of British produce which is now sent to San Francisco, or to any other American port; or, in other words, the British proprietor pays as a tax to the United States nearly the value of every third cargo of fish, timber, or coal which he sends to any American port. The reciprocity treaty utterly abolishes those fearful imposts, and establishes a system of free trade in the produce of British colonies. The effects of that measure in developing the trade and natural resources of the colony can, therefore, be hardly overestimated. The coal, the timber, and the productive fisheries of Vancouver's Island will assume a value before unknown; while every branch of trade will start into activity, and become the means of pouring wealth into the country. So unbounded is the reliance which I place in the enterprise and intelligence possessed by the people of this colony, and in the colony, and in the advantages of their geographical position, that with equal rights and a fair field I think they may enter into a successful competition with the people of any other country. The extension of the reciprocity treaty to this island once gained, the interests will become inseparably

connected with the principles of free trade, a system which I think it will be sound policy on our part to encourage.

"Gentlemen, the colony has been again visited this year by a large party of northern Indians, and their presence has excited in our minds a not unreasonable degree of alarm. Through the blessing of God they have kept from committing acts of open violence, and been quiet and orderly in their deportment; yet the presence of large bodies of armed savages, who have never felt the restraining influences of moral and religious training, and who are accustomed to follow the impulses of their own evil natures more than the dictation of reason or justice, gives rise to a feeling of insecurity which must exist as long as the colony remains without military protection. Her Majesty's government, ever alive to the dangers which beset the colony, have arranged with the lords commissioners of the Admiralty, that the *President* frigate should be sent to Vancouver's Island; and the measure will, I have no doubt, be carried into effect without delay. I shall nevertheless continue to conciliate the goodwill of the native Indian tribes by treating them with justice and forbearance, and by rigidly protecting their civil and agrarian rights. Many cogent reasons of humanity and sound policy recommend that course to our attention; and I shall, therefore, rely upon your support in carrying such measures into effect. We know, from our own experience,

that the friendship of the natives is at all times useful, while it is no less certain that their enmity may become more disastrous than any other calamity to which the colony is directly exposed.

"Gentlemen of the House of Assembly, according to the constitutional usage, with you must originate all money bills; it is therefore your special province to consider the ways and means of defraying the ordinary expenses of the government, either by levying a customs duty on imports, or by a system of direct taxation. The poverty of the country and the limited means of a population struggling against the pressure of numberless privations, must necessarily restrict the amount of taxation; it should, therefore, be our constant study to regulate the public expenditure according to the means of the country, and to live strictly within our income. The common error of running into speculative improvements entailing debts upon the colony, for a very uncertain advantage, should be carefully avoided. The demands upon the public revenue will, at present, chiefly arise from the improvement of the internal communications of the country, and providing for the education of the young, the erection of places for public worship, the defence of the country, and the administration of justice.

"Gentlemen, I feel in all its force the responsibility now resting upon us. The interests and well being of thousands yet unborn may be affected by our decisions, and they will reverence or condemn

our acts according as they are found to influence, for good or for evil, the events of the future."

With this exordium, the legislature proceeded to its duties. The opening session was almost wholly devoted to the consideration of ways and means. It would appear on the whole to have been no small problem to make ends meet in the young colony. In 1855, for example, the total public expenditures reached the sum of £4,107 2s. 3d., of which £1,388 5s. 5d. were spent on roads and bridges; £683 18s. 1d. on surveys; £1,362 17s. 5d. on the church, chaplain and parsonage at Victoria; £100 on the administration of justice; £81 8s. 9d. on militia; £30 9s. 2d. on jail expenses; and £7 15s. 10d. on government premises. To meet this, an income of £334 17s. was derived from land sales, and the sum of £340 from the sale of licenses to deal in liquor, these being the sole local sources of revenue. The sum of £130 was voted to meet the expenses of the first House. This modest appropriation, it is of interest to note in the records, permitted the payment of £10 to the clerk of the House; £5 to the sergeant-at-arms; £20 for lighting, heating and furnishing; £50 for the copying of documents; £5 for stationery; while the remaining £40 were prudently withheld for current salaries.

Apart from this incursion into finance, little of an original nature was attempted by the assembly. Of its acts of ratification, the most important was that by which the rules of the Supreme Court, as previ-

ously in force for the administration of justice in civil cases, were continued without alteration. This done, the House lapsed into inactivity. In reality there was nothing for it to do. It introduced no new element into the government of the colony. It was not even representative of anything but the all pervading interests of the company. Douglas, the governor, was the company's factor-in-chief. Work, Finlayson and Tod, who made up the council, were respectively chief factor, chief trader and ancient pensioner of the company. The seven members of the House were no less of the monopoly. Helmcken, the Speaker, was the company's staff doctor; Pemberton was its surveyor-general; and McKay was its clerk. Muir and Kennedy were retired servants. Yates was its beneficiary; and Skinner was an agent of the Puget Sound Company. Cameron, the chief-justice, was the brother-in-law of Douglas; Anderson, the collector of duties, was a retired chief-trader. For the real history of the island, therefore, during the period of representative institutions as before, it is from the archives of the Hudson's Bay Company that enquiry must be made. The acts of Douglas as governor and his official despatches to the colonial office are well known; of Douglas as chief factor and the communications which he held with the London directorate—the hidden springs to which the outside show responded—we have but occasional glimpses or such stray particles of fact as may be gleaned by inference or from alien sources.

Thus, without incident or variation, the government of Vancouver Island continued until 1859, when the end came of the second five years' term of the Hudson's Bay Company's rule. In truth, the administration of the colony, as apart from the company, had proved a matter of small difficulty. There was but one constable. As no means were provided for paying a recorder or other administrator of justice, the governor himself had acted in that capacity. In the place of sheriffs and a militia, a body of mounted police termed "*voltigeurs*" was organized from among the settlers and servants of the company. On only two occasions was a display of force found necessary. In December 1852, a shepherd at Christmas Hill was killed by two natives, one of whom fled to Cowichan and the other to Nanaimo. To allay the settlers' alarm, Douglas with a contingent borrowed from H.M.S. *Thetis*, then lying at Esquimalt, proceeded to the Saanich village, where after a characteristic parley the murderer was handed over. The expedition then passed to Nanaimo and secured the second culprit. At both places the natives were sternly admonished. On the return to Victoria the criminals were tried and executed. Some time later a white man was shot by an Indian at Cowichan, but the offender was again delivered up, after a demonstration as before, and was hanged in the presence of his people. Thus was the Indian taught to respect the white man's law.

The disruption of this curious fabric was in the end as sudden as it was complete. No other agency, it may be safely said, than that which brought the result to pass, could have achieved it with the same unexpectedness and finality. That agency was the discovery of placer gold. The incident belongs to more than local history, the opening of the gold fields of British Columbia being among the most notable of those dazzling events which have fluttered from time to time the financial capitals of the world and opened new paths for the adventurous to sudden and marvellous wealth.

As early as the régime of Blanshard, rumours of the finding of gold had reached Victoria from the Queen Charlotte Islands. More in alarm than gratification at the news, a brigantine had been despatched by the company to investigate. It discovered quartz but no placers. In the following year, however, expeditions from various quarters landed on the islands; and on January 14th, 1852, Douglas was able to report the definite discovery of gold on the western coast. It appeared strongly advisable to the governor at this juncture to prohibit foreigners from landing on the new gold fields. Several vessels, he pointed out to the colonial secretary, had sailed from the United States, and more were being outfitted on the California sea-board, the crews being prepared to overcome opposition by their numbers and the ease with which reinforcements of adventurers might be obtained from San

Francisco. Attention was also called to the hostile attitude of the Indians. The Admiralty in reply ordered H.M.S. *Thetis* to assert Her Majesty's sovereignty over the islands; but it was decided not to prohibit the vessels of foreign countries from landing men and stores there. In May of the same year, Douglas accordingly thought it advisable to report more fully on the matter. Seven American ships, he informed Earl Grey, with between forty and seventy men each, had arrived in Gold Harbour, four having returned after landing fifteen men and erecting a blockhouse. "It is very certain," he added, "that success will have the effect of attracting crowds of adventurers from the American settlements to the Queen Charlotte Islands, and it will be no easy task to eject them when firmly established." The admission of foreigners to the gold fields of British Columbia was from first to last, as will be seen, the cause of much disquietude to the governor.

These and other representations bore fruit at the close of the year, when Douglas received a commission as lieutenant-governor of the Queen Charlotte Islands—"to meet the circumstances of the time." Power was by the same instrument granted him to issue licenses, on the express understanding that they did not give a title in the soil. He was requested also to forward the names of persons who might act as justices of the peace. Enclosed with the despatch which bore these orders were copies of

letters which had been issued instructing the Admiralty to protect British property and interests from foreign violation and calling the attention of the United States government to the actions of its citizens on the Pacific. Douglas, on their receipt, at once drew up a proclamation with regard to the taking out of licenses, the conditions which he attached to the latter being similar to those enforced in New South Wales, the most important difference lying in the fact that the fee in the Queen Charlotte Islands was placed at ten instead of twenty shillings.

In the excitement which followed these developments, a number of expeditions made haste to the islands. Five vessels were reported in Mitchell Harbour at one time; and the hills were full of prospectors. The end, however, was disappointment. One quartz vein, seven inches in width and traceable for eight feet, contained in places twenty-five per cent. of gold; but the hope of loading vessels with the treasure was soon abandoned. From a pocket on Gold Harbour, Moresby Island, between $20,000 and $25,000 were taken (or were reported to have been taken) but more was probably spent in the mining of it than was finally recovered. About the same time Indians from the Skeena River brought in nuggets to the company's fort, but the several expeditions that were sent out to locate the sources met with failure. The whole movement died almost as suddenly as it began.

The flurry with regard to the Queen Charlotte Islands serves but as introductory episode in the history proper of the gold fields of British Columbia. These, as is well known to fame, lay on the mainland, in the beds of the Fraser and Thompson Rivers, from whose golden sands millions of dollars worth of the precious metal was washed annually for many succeeding years. Exactly how, when, or where the finds were first made is uncertain, amid the mass of legend offering on the subject. Gold dust, according to one report, had been seen by the company in the possession of the natives at Kamloops as early as1852, though no suspicion was awakened at the time as to the wealth of the neighbourhood. Gold, according to a letter of Douglas written in 1860, was first discovered on the Thompson River by an Indian a short distance below Nicommen. Quaffing from the stream, he saw a shining pebble: it proved to be gold. Finlayson mentions the discoveries of McLean, the officer in charge at Kamloops, as among the earliest incidents of the gold-mining epoch. According to Anderson, the first intimation that the company received of the existence of gold in the interior was in 1855, when some particles of the metal were found by a servant of the company who was idly washing a pannikin of gravel near Fort Colville. The result was the opening of diggings close by, which proved only moderately remunerative. Later, in a version of the story which accounts for the spread of the

news, some Canadians went over from Colville to the Thompson and Fraser, found gold everywhere, were followed by others, who in turn sent the reports over Puget Sound to San Francisco. In less than a year after, twenty thousand miners were on their way to the Fraser.

The first official mention of the discoveries was made by Douglas to the home government in a despatch dated April 16th, 1856. This had reference to the finds on the Upper Columbia. That they were not seriously regarded is shown by the fact that the subject was permitted to rest until July 1857. In the latter year, it appears, the Indians had expelled some parties of gold-seekers from this region, partly from a desire to retain the gold, and partly because they feared that the operations of the gold-diggers would prevent the salmon from ascending the river. Later in the same year, however, Douglas in a letter to Labouchère speaks of the Couteau mines, so named from the natives of the Thompson and Shushwap countries, as attracting attention, though up to October 6th, 1857, only three hundred ounces of gold had been exported through the agency of the company. Nevertheless, on the same date as his letter, Douglas issued a proclamation declaring all gold in its natural place of deposit to belong to the Crown and that persons might not "dig or disturb the soil in search of gold until authorized in that behalf by Her Majesty's colonial government." The authorization in question was to be ob-

tained by payment of a license of 10s. a month, Douglas excusing his action in the matter by the fact that he was invested with command over the district by the Hudson's Bay Company, and that he was the only representative of the Crown within reach. The cost of these licenses was raised to 21s. before the end of the following January.

The immediate result of the policy of causing the miners to pay tribute in this manner was to bring them one and all to Victoria as the starting-point for the new diggings. Coming as they did from California by sea, Victoria was naturally the first point of call; had no license been required, however, they might have gone through direct to the Fraser. Though the effect upon a number was merely to cause a break in the journey, upon others, owing to transportation difficulties, a longer stay was necessitated. During the spring and summer months of 1858, the rush was extraordinary. Ocean steamers crowded with gold-seekers arrived almost daily. From a hamlet clustered about a Hudson's Bay trading-post, Victoria sprang suddenly into a city. No accurate record of arrivals was kept; but it has been estimated that between twenty thousand and twenty-five thousand persons passed through its portals. Every trade, nationality and condition was represented in that throng. From the Oregon coast to San Francisco, men dropped the instruments of their calling, hastily sold what could most readily be converted into cash, left homes uncared for, and

boarded the first nondescript carrier whose prow turned northward. Some who avoided the passage by sea followed the coast by land, or attempted to reach the goal through the mountain passes of the interior. The gambler and the parasite followed in their wake. California's population was seriously depleted; San Francisco was threatened with bankruptcy. In Victoria the sound of the hammer was incessant day and night. Buildings to the number of two hundred and upward arose in six weeks. The land office was besieged before daylight. There was all but a food famine. Flour rose to $30.00 a barrel; ship biscuit was not to be had; lumber brought $100 a thousand feet; town lots sold at $1,000 per foot frontage. Victoria became immediately the most important shipping centre of the coast, and its docks were crowded with merchandise. Of the promiscuous population that continued to pour in, many remained in the city. Those in search of gold pressed on to the Fraser,—in canoes, in improvised sailing boats or in steamers, daunted by no dangers and enduring the severest hardships. Many were lost in the tide-rips, and of those that reached the great river thousands were doomed to disappointment. The Fraser begins to rise in June, and does not reach its ebb until the autumn. High water covers the bars and renders placer mining impossible. Some of the more indomitable pushed on at the risk of life to Hope and Yale, the head of navigation. The great majority, however, turned

their backs on British Columbia and repaired again to San Francisco. Those who remained met with their reward. When the Fraser fell, the harvest was rich. Some $543,000 in gold was shipped out in that year alone, and it is estimated that the total output was from $150,000 to $200,000 greater than that amount.

The invasion of this wild and lawless multitude presented a serious problem to Douglas, badly equipped as he was for maintaining order and enforcing the authority of his government. On May 8th, 1858, he gives voice again in a despatch to the fear which had so beset him at the time of the gold discoveries on the Queen Charlotte Islands—the fear of the foreigner who knew not the company. He admits the openings for trade presented by the inrush, as well as the practical impossibility of stemming so fierce a tide; yet he cannot refrain, notwithstanding the peremptory mandate of Lytton that it was no part of British policy to exclude foreigners from the gold fields, from casting about for means of regulation and profit other than those that went hand in hand with a policy of unrestriction. One plan which he ventured to suggest as asserting the interest of the Crown at the same time that it assured a revenue to the company, involved an arrangement with the United States Pacific Mail Company whereby the Hudson's Bay Company would enjoy a monopoly of the trade on the Fraser River and receive a com-

pensation of two dollars per capita for each passenger carried to the head of navigation, the steamers to accept no passengers but those who had paid for licenses from the government of Vancouver Island. The arrangement was to continue for one year. Lord Lytton, however, promptly disapproved of the conditions as too favourable to the company, and as a matter of fact, the arrangement was never more than a project within the mind.

Shortly after the beginning of the influx Douglas made a trip in person to the mainland, ascending the Fraser to Forts Langley, Hope and Yale. At Langley a number of speculators had taken possession of the land and were staking lots for sale; unlicensed and contraband trading had also sprung up. These matters were speedily righted. At Fort Hope, the miners, prior to his arrival, had organized a form of government and had posted regulations. These were replaced by rules proclaimed in the name of the governor of Vancouver Island.

An incident is related of this trip which brings into prominence the practical wisdom of the governor. Landing at Hill's Bar, he inquired concerning the presence of a British subject, with a view to the appointment of a justice of the peace. The one man indicated to him confessed to a lack of knowledge of the law, and recommended a versatile and well-known foreigner to the governor's attention. Impressed by the man's candour, Douglas declared

that if he knew the difference between right and wrong his qualifications were sufficient, and he was forthwith appointed to administer the law.

In June, Douglas in a despatch to Lord Stanley gave a detailed account of this journey. "Evidence is obtained," he wrote, "of the existence of gold over a vast extent of country situated both north and south of the Fraser River, and the conviction is gradually forcing itself on my mind that not only the Fraser River and its tributary streams, but the whole country situated to the eastward of the Gulf of Georgia, as far north as Johnstone's Straits, is one continued bed of gold, of incalculable value and extent." In view of this, he proposed that the land be thrown open for settlement, and that it be surveyed and sold at a rate not to exceed 20s. an acre. He pointed out, at the same time, that compensation would have to be made to the Hudson's Bay Company for giving up their rights of exclusive trade.

It was in reply to this communication that Douglas received intelligence of a decision on the part of the home government fraught with important consequences to himself and the country. Mention has been made before of the proceedings of that select committee of inquiry which placed so unfavourable a report regarding the Hudson's Bay Company before the British parliament of 1858. In Canada a similar investigation had been made with a like result. This and the discovery of gold on the

Fraser River had convinced the government of the need of radical change, west as well as east of the Rockies. On August 2nd, 1858, accordingly, an Act was passed providing for the government of the mainland of British America, from the 49th parallel northward to the Naas and the Finlay, and from the crest of the Rocky Mountains westward to the sea, including the Queen Charlotte and adjacent islands with the exception of Vancouver Island. One month later, the license of exclusive trade granted to the Hudson's Bay Company for twenty-one years from 1838, in so far as it covered the territory above defined, was revoked, the government re-purchasing the company's rights on Vancouver Island for £57,500. Of British Columbia[1] (for by that name it was decided that the new colony on the mainland should be known) it was proposed that Douglas should be governor, the office to be held in conjunction with his present post in Vancouver Island. The condition was added that he should sever all connection with the Hudson's Bay and Puget Sound Companies. The additional salary offered was at first £1,000. Douglas expressed appreciation of the honour and accepted the conditions. "With the consent of the Hudson's Bay Company," he wrote, "I place my humble services unhesitatingly at the disposal of Her Majesty's government, and I will take early measures for withdrawing from the company and

[1] See appendix "O"

disposing of my Puget Sound stock, trusting that the allowance as to salary from Her Majesty's government will be adequate to my support in a manner worthy of the position I am called upon to fill." The allowance, in Douglas's opinion, ought to have been £5,000, his fortune having been impaired by his almost unrequited tenure of office in Vancouver Island. The colonial secretary, however, did not feel justified in assigning a larger sum than £1,800 at the time, though it was intimated that an increase derived from local funds would not be opposed if the revenue should warrant it.

Thus ended the long connection of the famous chief factor and the company. Thus also died the exclusive rights of the great monopoly in the territory west of the Rocky Mountains. Douglas belongs henceforth to the public life of the country, and to that alone; while the company takes its place in the ranks of private trading enterprises, still powerful, and with a unique part still to play in the upbuilding of the country, but on no other basis than that of equal privilege.

CHAPTER VIII

THE TWO COLONIES

IN an extended series of despatches addressed to Douglas, bearing date July and August 1858, Sir Edward Bulwer Lytton, the colonial secretary, set forth, amid a wealth of comment, the principles by which, under the watchful tutelage of the home government, the early steps of the province of British Columbia were to be guided. These formed at once the constitution and the Magna Charta of the new community. They occupy from many points of view a remarkable place in the history of the colonial institutions of Great Britain.

The main feature of the plan was that it placed the entire functions both of government and legislation in the hands of Douglas. A check was indeed provided in the form of a council, which the governor was recommended to select as soon as possible, and to which foreigners as well as British subjects might be eligible. It was also declared with emphasis that the colony was expected to adopt representative institutions at the earliest moment practicable. But the effect of these provisions was less real than apparent. The council was purely advisory; and the remoteness of the time when the chaotic population of the mainland might be capable of political organization served but to

emphasize the extraordinary powers that were entrusted meanwhile to the governor.

Ways and means were perhaps the second matter to receive attention. It was thought that the exceptional resources of the country, including as they did not only fertile lands (the leading element of success, as Great Britain held, in all colonial settlements), a magnificent system of harbours and waterways, and that wealth in precious mineral which was even now attracting immigrants on so unprecedented a scale, would soon provide a revenue. Moderate duties on beer, wine, spirits, and the other articles usually subject to such taxation, as well as the sale of lands,—especially town lots for which high prices might be demanded,—were regarded at the outset as preferable to any system of mining licenses. The latter, however, were not forbidden, the colonial secretary contenting himself with a reference to the experience of Australia, which had not been happy in this method of applying the principles of direct taxation.

Other provisions were of a miscellaneous character. The establishment of a seaport town and of a seat of government were suggested. It was promised that a party of Royal Engineers would be sent from England to survey lands for settlement (the disposal of which should be by gradual process), to open roads and to choose sites for the cities above mentioned. An experienced officer was to be furnished to assist in the formation of an adequate police

force. A collector of customs and a judge were also promised. Arrangements for the transmission of mails via Panama and the levying of postage were authorized. In general, it was provided that the country in various directions should be developed, as soon as full reports concerning its resources could be prepared by the governor or his assistants. Every care was enjoined upon the governor not to antagonize or irritate the mixed population now swarming into the country. Especially was there to be no jealousy of or discrimination against foreigners, who were to be convinced in every legitimate way that their interests would be protected by the government. Kindness towards the Indians was commanded. Other instructions had reference to the discouragement of speculation, the granting of naturalization, and the making of appointments with a view both to efficiency and the satisfaction of local feeling.

The bearing of the new arrangement upon the status of the Hudson's Bay Company, hitherto sole overlord of the whole vast region, had been sufficiently indicated by the measure which revoked the special privileges granted in 1838, 1849, and 1854. Nevertheless it was thought advisable, in view of the recent past, to remind the governor with some particularity that at no time had these privileges gone further than to guarantee exclusive trade with the Indians of the Fraser River. Even before the establishment of the colony, the company, it was

pointed out, had no right to exclude strangers; it had no rights of government or of occupation of the soil; it had no right to prevent or interfere with any kind of trading, except with the Indians alone. The British government, however, went even further in its watchfulness than this explicit definition. "You will pardon me if I enjoin on you as imperative," wrote the colonial secretary to Douglas, "the most diligent care that in the sales of land there should not be the slightest cause to impute a desire to show favour to the servants of the Hudson's Bay Company. Parliament will watch with jealousy every proceeding connected with such sales; and I shall rely upon you to take every precaution which not only impartial probity but deliberate prudence can suggest, that there shall be no handle given for a charge, I will not say of favour, but of indifference or apathy to the various kinds of land-jobbing, either to benefit favoured individuals or to cheat the land revenue, which are of so frequent occurrence at the outset of colonization, and which it is the duty of Her Majesty's government, so far as lies in them, to repress."

The man upon whom the weight of these important and manifold counsels was laid had at least the entire confidence of the home government. "I cannot conclude," wrote the colonial secretary at the close of one of his despatches, "without a cordial expression of my sympathy in the difficulties you have encountered and of my

sense of the ability, the readiness of resource, the wise and manly temper of conciliation which you have so signally displayed; and I doubt not that you will continue to show the same vigour and discretion in its exercise; and you may rely with confidence upon whatever support and aid Her Majesty's government can afford you." And again with more particular reference to the future and to the responsibilities entrusted to him in this extraordinary manner: "These powers are indeed of very serious and unusual extent, but Her Majesty's government fully rely on your moderation and discretion. You are aware that they have only been granted on account of the very unusual circumstances which have called into being the colony committed to your charge, and which may for some time continue to characterize it. To use them, except for the most necessary purpose, would be, in truth, to abuse them greatly. They are required for the maintenance of British law and British habits of order, and for regulating the special questions to which the conditions of employment and of the population may give birth."

To attempt, within ordinary limits, to describe the somewhat elastic manner in which application was made of the comprehensive scheme outlined above, is to be plunged at once into a mass of incident, each phase of which has both its own and its reflected importance, but the heterogeneous

nature of which renders the topical method difficult. The government of which Douglas formed the embodiment was in effect a means by which difficulties might be met by competent authority as they arose. It was not expected to attain at once to system, where even precedent had to be created. For this reason it will be well to follow somewhat closely for a time the movements of the governor himself as he proceeded to the execution of his difficult task. But first a word is needed as to the men and the material which were placed at his disposal, and the general nature of the problem involved in the first attempt at government in British Columbia.

To the command of the Royal Engineers, the promise of which had been the most stirring note of cheer in the despatches of the home government and a detachment of which was on its way to British Columbia within a few weeks, Colonel Richard Clement Moody had been appointed. He bore, in addition, the title of chief commissioner of lands and works, with a latent commission as lieutenant-governor of the colony, in case of the incapacity or absence of Douglas. That there might be no misunderstanding as to the nature of his office and its relation to that of the governor, his instructions were to an unusual degree explicit. The governor, it was explained, was the supreme authority in the colony and his orders were to prevail as to the spots at which all surveys and other public works should be carried out. At the same time the duties

of the commissioner were to be regarded as special and not to be interfered with except under circumstances of the greatest gravity. The raising of a revenue from land sales being of immediate importance, the commissioner was urged to afford the governor, without shackling the latter's discretion, the benefit of his talents and experience in ensuring this paramount object. Full reports were to be made from time to time of the various resources of the colony—its mines, its fisheries, the qualities of its coal, the nature of its soil, and its maritime approaches—with a view to the immediate development of the social and industrial welfare of the community. With regard to the military employment of his force, the utmost discretion was to be used. "No soldiers," wrote the colonial secretary to Moody, "are likely to be more popular then the Royal Engineers, partly, let me hope, from their military discipline and good conduct, and partly from the civil nature of their duties in clearing the headway for civilization. Thus, if not ostentatiously setting forth its purely military character, the force at your command will, nevertheless, when the occasion may need its demonstration, do its duty as soldiers no less than as surveyors . . . . . Wherever England extends her sceptre, there as against the foreign enemy she pledges the defence of her sword. It seems meanwhile" he continued, "a good augury of the coöperation of the colonists in any measure demanding public spirit, that the miners themselves

are constructing a road, of which seven miles are completed, and that they have organized themselves into bands under leaders, thus recognizing discipline as the element of success in all combined undertakings. Each miner thus employed deposits with the governor $25 as security for good conduct. I need not add that a governor who could at once inspire confidence and animate exertion must have many high qualities which will ensure your esteem and add to the satisfaction with which you will cooperate with his efforts."

The first contingent of the force, consisting of twenty non-commissioned officers and men, left England by the steamer *La Plata* on September 2nd, arriving at Victoria in November. A second followed soon. In a third party, which sailed by the clipper-ship *Thames City* around the Horn, were included three officers, a staff assistant surgeon, one hundred and eighteen non-commissioned officers and men, together with thirty-one women and thirty-four children, the whole in charge of Captain R. H. Luard. Moody arrived in December. The *La Plata* among its despatches to Douglas bore three of special importance: the first including his commission as governor of British Columbia; a second empowering him to make provision for the administration of justice; and a third informing him of the revocation of the charter to the Hudson's Bay Company of 1838 with reference to territory on the mainland west of the Rocky Mountains.

Another appointment of the time, fraught with even greater importance to the colony, was that of Matthew Baillie Begbie as judge of British Columbia. He arrived in November, 1858. Though the office, strictly speaking, was judicial, he was instructed for the present to lend his assistance in the framing of laws and other legal business more properly pertaining to the functions of an attorney-general, the first incumbent of that office, Mr. G. H. Cary, not being appointed until some time later. Until his death in 1894 Begbie continued from sheer force of character as well as of intellect to fill a unique and commanding place in the affairs of British Columbia. Born in Edinburgh in 1819, and educated at Cambridge and Lincoln's Inn, he succeeded to the office of chief-justice of the united colonies of British Columbia and Vancouver Island in 1866, Needham, the chief-justice of the latter, who had followed Cameron in 1858, having been transferred to Trinidad. To Begbie, perhaps more than any other man, the colony owed the healthful ordinances, the liberal provisions of government, and the unbroken reign of peace and order which it enjoyed almost from the moment of its birth. There will be occasion on a later page to notice at least one example of the practical statesmanship of this remarkable man.

W. Wymond Hamley was appointed collector of customs and Chartres Brew, who had served with distinction in the Crimea, chief of the con-

stabulary. Travaillot and Hicks were nominated assistant commissioners of Crown lands at Thompson River and Yale, and W. H. Bevis, revenue officer at Langley. The colonial secretary was W. A. G. Young, and the treasurer, W. D. Gosset. James D. Pemberton, the surveyor-general of Vancouver Island, acted for a time in the same capacity in British Columbia, with B. W. Pearse as his first assistant. By October 27th, 1858, it may be remarked, the governor was able to forward a report from Pemberton on the important subject of the disposal of Crown lands which included a proposal to use the 49th parallel as a base in all surveys, with a suggestion that mineral lands should be held at £1 per acre, town sites according to the value of location, and agricultural lands at considerably less.

On the subject of officers, in general, Douglas was under instructions to make his selections, where possible, in England, it being regarded as of "great importance to the general social welfare and dignity of the colony that gentlemen should be encouraged to come from this kingdom, not as mere adventurers seeking employment but in the hope of obtaining professional occupations for which they are calculated; such for instance as stipendiary magistrates, or gold commissioners." A warning was again added against favouritism to the employees of the Hudson's Bay Company, and it was again declared that for the avoidance of all appearance of

local preference "careful appointments should be made in England." Up to June 30th, 1859, Douglas had recommended the following officers, among others, in British Columbia, nearly every name in the list having since passed into the history of the community: W. R. Spalding, as stipendiary magistrate and justice of the peace at Queenborough; Peter O'Reilly, Thomas Elwyn and H. M. Ball to the same offices at Langley, Lillooet and Lytton, respectively; Charles S. Nicoll, to be high sheriff at Port Douglas; E. H. Sanders, as assistant gold commissioner at Fort Yale; Charles Good, as chief clerk in the colonial secretary's office; John Cooper, as chief clerk of the treasury; W. H. McCrae, as clerk in the Custom House; A. T. Bushby, to be registrar of the Supreme Court; Charles Wylde, as revenue officer at Langley. In addition there were resident at New Westminster, W. D. Gosset, treasurer; F. G. Claudet, assayer; and C. A. Bacon, melter. In later years the number of applicants for office coming from Great Britain, often with influential letters of introduction, was a source of no small embarrassment to Douglas.

It was indeed an extraordinary community to which the offices of government were now to be extended. Scattered along the reaches of the lower Fraser or clambering in widely scattered bands over the mountainous divides in search of further fields, not less than thirty thousand miners had rushed into the district—of a class, the most un-

bridled in the world. Of these, however, scarcely more than four thousand were left at the end of the summer season, the difficulties of the high water and of the terrific rapids and canyons of the Fraser having driven out the rest. Another influx occurred in October, but it was of small account compared with the first. The bars began a few miles above Hope, and on the thirteen which lay between that point and Yale two or three thousand men were digging in the sands. At Yale there was another seven or eight hundred. Tents and log huts provided shelter. Provisions, once the first rush was over, were fairly abundant at these lower points. Bacon, salmon, bread, tea and coffee formed the staple diet; and a good meal could be bought for one dollar. Milk and butter were unknown. High spirits prevailed save among the few whom the unaccustomed hardships and deprivations were slowly grinding to death. On the whole, though the camps held many a wild and abandoned character, acts of lawlessness were singularly infrequent; but the mass was as a smouldering fire ready to burst into a flame of revolt on provocation of its untamed sense of justice. Above Yale a different story was told. Ingress barred by the tremendous "lower big canyon" and "upper big canyon" of the Fraser, and by the increasing savagery of the natives, only the most reckless and determined had forced their way thither. Still higher, on the Thompson, a few who had crossed from the Upper Columbia by the old

trail of the Hudson's Bay Company, were fighting slow starvation in the absence of stores and the impossibility of bringing in supplies. With the exception of the scattered and demoralized fur traders and the outraged and exasperated Indians, such in 1858 was the colony of British Columbia.

During his tenure of the double office, Douglas was of necessity an itinerant governor of the mainland colony, and in the record of his several visits, set forth in ample detail in the reports which he forwarded to the colonial office, a large part of the early history of British Columbia is to be read. The first of these visits has been already mentioned. The second was undertaken in the September following his appointment as governor. A force of marines from H.M.S. *Satellite*, then acting as guard ship in British Columbia waters, made ready to accompany him, in view of recent troubles with the Indians; it does not appear, however, that the contingent was made use of. The first place of call was Fort Hope, the station at which the detachment of engineers not yet arrived were to be set at work, and from which a road to Yale was urgently needed. Some three thousand miners and traders were huddled at the time about the stockade in tents or huts. Provisions were scarce and dear, pork and flour selling at one dollar a pound. Bad blood between the Indians and the whites had been aroused, the improper sale of liquor being probably the chief cause. Realizing the impossibility of stamping out

the traffic among the miners, Douglas determined to turn it to the account of revenue by legalizing it at the rate of $600 for a license. For selling liquor to the natives the penalty was placed at $25 to $100. Town lots were largely demanded and no difficulty was experienced in disposing of a large number under leases terminable at the pleasure of the Crown, held at a monthly rental of £4 8s. payable in advance on the understanding that the holder would be allowed a pre-emption right of purchase when the land was sold, in which case the rent would count as part of the purchase money. Aliens might hold lands for three years, after which they must become naturalized; failing, they would either forfeit their holdings or be forced to convey them to British subjects. The organization of a police force proved impracticable owing to the high wages prevailing, the earnings of the miners in the neighbourhood, which fixed the standard, ranging from £1 to £5 a day. So, too, the idea of a court-house and jail was abandoned for lack of the sum of £1,000 which the erection would have required. A justice of the peace and revenue officer, however, was appointed, and a chief constable sworn in. Mr. George Pearkes, the Crown solicitor for Vancouver Island, who accompanied Douglas, Begbie not yet having arrived, sat at the head of a commission which brought various offenders to justice; among the latter a miner named Eaton who had murdered a comrade was sentenced to transportation for life.

The enforcement of such penalties in the absence of any penal settlement and owing to the heavy expense of deportation was another of the difficulties of Douglas. From Hope the governor journeyed to Yale, visiting the different encampments by the way. Here grants of land were made on the same conditions as at Hope, a justice of the peace appointed, together with a chief constable at $150 per month. A police magistrate was also appointed at Lower Fountainville. The governor returned on September 26th, having by his speeches and reforms done much to create content among the miners and to allay the irritation of the natives.

On November 17th an imposing party of officials left Victoria for the headquarters of the new colony. The governor was in command, with Rear-Admiral Baynes, Cameron, the chief-justice of Vancouver Island, and Begbie, the judge of British Columbia, who with several officers of the Royal Engineers, had now arrived ; and their mission was the formal launching of the colony of British Columbia. They sailed in H.M.S *Satellite*, with the Hudson's Bay Company's *Otter* in attendance. Within the mouth of the Fraser, the *Beaver* and the *Recovery* received the party, which was landed at new Fort Langley. The day of the ceremonial broke dark and lowering. A guard of honour received His Excellency amid the firing of a salute; and in the presence of about one hundred persons assembled in a large room of the fort, the

weather rendering a meeting in the open impossible, the oaths of office were taken, first by Begbie as judge, and afterwards by Douglas as governor. Proclamation was made of the Act establishing the colony; of an instrument indemnifying the officers of the government from any irregularities that might have been committed during the interval prior to the establishment of the Act; declaring English law as the law of the colony; and revoking the exclusive privileges of the Hudson's Bay Company. The governor did not leave the fort until the following day, when a salute of fourteen guns pealed forth in his honour.

It was expected that New Langley, or, as it was now called, Derby, where these simple rites had taken place, would form the permanent capital of the colony, and with that in view a survey of the town was made and a sale of lots held soon after the departure of the governor. The upset price was placed at $100, but so spirited was the bidding that many of the lots brought from $200 to $400, and some of choice locations as high as $750 each. In all, the sum of $68,000 was realized from the sale of about four hundred lots. Work was begun upon a barracks for the Engineers, and tenders were invited for a court-house, a jail, a church and a parsonage. A proclamation to authorize the levying of customs duties was issued. In the midst of these and other preparations, however, Colonel Moody with his second in command, Captain J. M.

Grant, arrived, and their report, on military and other grounds, was unfavourable to Langley. It is possible that the close proximity of a large block of lands held in reserve by the Hudson's Bay Company may have had something to do with the original choice. After a careful survey of the river, the site of New Westminster, some distance lower down and on the opposite bank, was approved, and the purchasers of lots at Langley allowed to exchange them for locations in the new town. A dispute arose as to the naming of the capital, Moody proposing Queenborough, Douglas Queensborough, and Young objecting to both as a paraphrase of Victoria. The difficulty was referred for settlement to the queen who conferred on the place the title by which it has since been known. In laying out the town, a proposal that one-quarter should be reserved for purchasers in England and other colonies was vetoed by the colonial secretary as a stimulus to speculation by non-residents. In the following June a satisfactory sale of lots took place at New Westminster, three hundred and ten being sold for $89,000. The largest sum paid for a single lot was $1,925. In the meantime tenders for various public buildings had been received, and "Sapperton," the quarter chosen for the accomodation of the Engineers, was already rising in a spot notable for its romantic beauty.

Prior to this and immediately upon his arrival in the colony, Colonel Moody and the Engineers had

rendered prompt and excellent service in a matter of a wholly different nature. This was the affair of Hill's Bar, the richest and most populous camp on the river, and the headquarters for whatever discontent the restrictions of British law and government had created in the breasts of the foreign miners. Beginning in a quarrel of rival magistrates, the matter was fast assuming the appearance of an armed collision between the Yale and Hill's Bar camps, the latter under the leadership of one McGowan, a notorious ex-judge of California, now a fugitive from the vigilance committee of San Francisco. Moody in response to a despatch threw forward a company of Engineers to Hope, while a hundred marines and blue-jackets from the *Plumper* and the *Satellite* were landed at Langley. With Begbie and Lieutenant Mayne of the *Plumper* alone, Moody himself went on to Yale, with the object of investigating in person the causes and true proportions of the disturbance. The first church service in Yale was held by Moody during this visit. An unprovoked assault by McGowan during his stay confirmed the opinion that occasion alone was wanting for the whole community of miners to break into open insubordination. Under cover of night, accordingly, the Engineers were ordered up to Yale and the marines set in motion at Langley. The vigour and celerity of the demonstration had the desired effect. Apologies were tendered by McGowan and the incipient dissatisfaction was

checked before it had time to gather. After a further outrage McGowan fled the country. Though not devoid of travesty, the incident was of wholesome effect upon the scattered and irresponsible community as showing at least the energy and power of the government and its determination to enforce good order.

Even prior to the coming of the Royal Engineers and the establishment of the colony, the governor had launched his famous undertaking of opening up the country by means of roads, for which, if for no other achievement, his administration merits the supreme praise of efficiency. Here, as in so many cases, Douglas's long and thorough training in the needs and methods of the fur trade stood the colony in good stead. With Victoria as centre many miles of excellent roadway had been built in the neighbouring districts of Vancouver Island. When, therefore, on the discovery of gold on the Fraser, the need of roads became the problem of the hour, no lack of official will or understanding had to be overcome. How this need was met in the earliest instance has been already hinted at in the words of the colonial secretary to Moody. As an illustration of the resourcefulness of Douglas and his complete command of those rebellious forces which at the time were all he had at his disposal—forces which in less trained or skilful hands might have run only in disorganized or harmful channels—the

building of the first trail to the Fraser diggings is of more than passing interest.

To the miners who had braved successfully the dangers of the sea passage from California, there still remained to surmount the swift and treacherous current of the Fraser, narrowed into a torrent above Yale. Monopoly was soon to lay an added tribute on the country's development, the foreign owners of the steamboats plying on the lower river having joined to raise the cost of transport from £5 to £14 a ton, a charge that brought the inhabitants above to the verge of starvation. By the power of withholding the privilege of registration, however, this evil was in time corrected, and the obstacles against which Douglas fought in the present instance were those of nature alone. From Yale, no other avenue was open to the mines which lay beyond, than the rough and precipitous footpath of the river's edge, where, on men's backs to and fro over the cliff, the food and tools of the miners had perforce to be conveyed. How to transport supplies to the front around these difficulties became at once the all-important question. To some returning miners a route from Anderson Lake to Lillooet, thence by Harrison Lake and river to the Fraser, was shown by the Indians. The distance was seventy miles, over a generally level country. There were five hundred miners at Victoria on their way to the diggings, restless and idle men through the lack of easy transport. With instant

appreciation of the situation, Douglas adopted the following plan for the construction of a pack road by the route described. In consideration of a deposit of $25 and an agreement to work upon the trail until it was finished, the Hudson's Bay Company at Victoria agreed to transport the miners to the point of commencement on Harrison River, feed them during the work, and at the end return the value of their deposit in supplies at Victoria prices. The combination of credit and coöperation involved in the plan had been suggested by the miners themselves and at once engaged their support. The work was speedily completed, and at the end the men received their money back, their transportation being reckoned a fair return for their labour, while the company in addition to the temporary use of the money deposited was left with a toll road of infinitely greater value than the transportation and provisions it had cost. Some disagreement arose as to the point at which the supplies covenanted by the company should be delivered, the men holding that the upper end of the trail had been implied while the company declared for the lower. This at the time was an issue of some importance, beans which cost $1\frac{1}{2}$ cents a pound at Victoria being worth 5 cents on the lower Fraser and $1.00 at the upper end of the new road. The dispute was ended by a compromise, the goods being delivered in the middle. The home government read a somewhat exalted lesson from this

achievement, as Douglas was often to be reminded. If the settlers would combine so readily in the construction of a road, united effort it was thought might safely be reckoned upon in the formation of a police, the establishment of law, the collection of revenue, and in the other efforts that might be necessary to make life secure and the community prosperous.

As it proved, this notable feat was but the prelude of a general plan of road building which under the existing conditions might justly be termed colossal. Roads followed the development of the country everywhere; no difficulty or cost of construction was permitted to stand in the way once the need was thoroughly demonstrated. A wagon road from the Harrison to the Upper Fraser, an enlargement in part of the first pack road, was built in stages by the Royal Engineers in the two years following their arrival. "The construction of the Harrison or Lillooet road," wrote Douglas in 1861, "has been the great source of expenditure this season, that work having cost the colony nearly £14,000. Large as the outlay may appear it very inadequately represents the value of this important public work which has removed the difficulty of access and the great impediment to the development of the mineral regions of British Columbia." Hope and Similkameen were also connected by a road surveyed and built by Mr. E. Dewdney (afterwards minister of the interior for Canada and

still later lieutenant-governor of British Columbia), in conjunction with Mr. Walter Moberly, C.E. This road, as subsequently extended and known as the Dewdney trail, passed through the southern interior as far as Fort Steele in East Kootenay, and formed for many years a well-used route of travel. Every season saw the completion of several important reaches in these and other links of the system which Douglas devised, all in accordance with a comprehensive plan. But the crowning work of the series was the completion of the great wagon road to Cariboo. From Yale along the rocky canyons and defiles of the Fraser, it wound past Lytton and the Thompson by way of Ashcroft and the Bonaparte, joining the road from Lillooet at Clinton, and forming with other units of the plan a mighty artery of travel deep into the heart of the gold country. Even by present standards it was no mean feat of engineering. It opened a region of unexpected richness for agriculture: how rich in gold it was to prove will be referred to further on.

It would seem that even larger plans than these had crossed the mind of Douglas. The trail from Hope to Kootenay, in his ambitious vision, might one day cross the Rockies, meeting at Edmonton a similar road built westward from the Canadas, the two to form a single great highway across the continent by which immigrants from the eastern colonies might enter the country—for Douglas looked rather to Canada than to England for the

replenishing of the Pacific settlements. The dream was realized more fully than even Douglas would have dared to hope when, within twenty years of his own achievements, an army of men were at work upon the mountain section of the Canadian Pacific Railway.

With the building of the system of communications of which the end was the opening up of Cariboo, the work of the Royal Engineers was finished. How large a part they had played in the early history of the colony may have been surmised from the few references given above that show them in the forefront of the colony's early development. Some feeling against their employment and the expense thereby incurred had arisen, and in 1863 it was deemed advisable that they should disband. Colonel Moody and some twenty-five of the force returned to England under the terms of their original agreement; the rest received grants of land and became permanent residents of the country.

In the record of official visits and reports that throw a light upon the early history of the colony, mention should be made of a notable journey taken by Mr. Justice Begbie in the spring of 1859. Accompanied by Nicoll, high sheriff of British Columbia, and by Bushby, as assize clerk and registrar, he proceeded by way of the Fountains to the Upper Fraser, returning by the Lillooet route to Langley. The points which chiefly impressed the

judge were, the ready submission of the foreign population to the will of the executive; the preponderance of the Californian element in the population; the richness, both auriferous and agricultural, of the country; the need of fixity of tenure for the promotion of agriculture; and the total absence of means of communication, rendering industrial occupations of whatever sort, with the single exception of gold-digging, practically impossible. More important, however, than his observations upon the condition of the young colony, Begbie established on this visit that character for stern justice and utter fearlessness, which left a lasting imprint on the progress of British Columbia. His administration of the law amongst those lawless multitudes had all the force and directness of the vigilance committee, without its passion. A lawyer to the core, he could do right in spite of law. He made himself the guardian rather than the judge of British Columbia, and he accomplished this result by his unflinching resolve that crime of no degree should go unpunished. No region in all that wild and inaccessible territory was too remote for the strong and searching arm of his justice, and the wrong done to an Indian or a Chinaman met with as prompt and sure requital as that done to a white man. With the knowledge gained in a few months' time that in the hands of Begbie justice was swift as it was inflexible, the battle of law and order

was already won, and the influence of the judge throughout the colony became greater perhaps than that of any other man.

It will be necessary, too, before leaving this personal chronicle, to notice the visit which Douglas paid to the mainland colony in the autumn of 1859. The tour included New Westminster, Langley, Douglas, Hope, and Yale, and was extended through the passes of the Fraser to Spuzzum and the mining districts west of that locality. There had been a decline in the number of miners since the previous year, and the governor estimated the entire white population of the colony at not more than six thousand men. The absence of wives and children was deplored. At the time, the exports of gold from British Columbia were valued at £14,000 monthly, but the estimate did not include the large amount remaining in the hands of the miners. No schools had yet been established. With regard to the importance of agriculture as a factor making for stability and permanence, the governor's views were pressed as follows: "The colony is yet destitute of one highly important element: it has no farming class, the population being almost entirely composed of miners and merchants. The attention of the government has been very earnestly directed to the means of providing for that want by the encouragement of agricultural settlers, a class that must eventually form the basis of the population, cultivate and improve the face of the country, and

render it a fit habitation for civilized man. The miner is at best a producer, and leaves behind him no traces but those of desolation; the merchant is allured by the hope of gain; but the durable prosperity and substantial wealth of states is, no doubt, derived from the cultivation of the soil. Without the farmer's aid British Columbia must ever remain a desert—be drained of its wealth, and dependent on other countries for daily food." The report also referred to the road-building operations of the moment in the following terms which convey very clearly the views of Douglas on the subject of his greatest work: "The great object of opening roads from the sea-coast into the interior of the country, and from New Westminster to Burrard's Inlet and Pitt River, continues to claim a large share of my attention. The labour involved in these works is enormous; but so essential are they as a means of settling and developing the resources of the country, that their importance can hardly be over-rated; and I, therefore, feel it incumbent on me to strain every nerve in forwarding the progress of undertakings so manifestly conducive to the prosperity of the colony, and which, at the same time, cannot fail, ere long, to produce a large increase in the public revenue. We hope to complete the last section of a pack road leading, by the left bank of the Fraser, from Derby to Lytton, a distance of one hundred and seventy miles, on or before February 1st next."

Inseparably associated with the early progress of the colony, and especially with those great undertakings to which reference has just been made—great both from their magnitude, the expenditures which they entailed, and the necessities which they met—was the vexing problem of finance. Here as on other points that will come in due course to be noted the governor and the home authorities were not always in agreement. Douglas, under stress of the immediate need, begged repeatedly for a grant from parliament, or, failing that, for a loan which the colony might repay when it had received the impetus which a wise expenditure would give to the development of its resources. In addition to roads, a seaport town, to render the colony with its five hundred miles of seaboard less dependent upon Victoria, was needed. For this purpose the governor, taking into account the difficulty of access to the Fraser, and looking forward to the time when the colonies of British Columbia and Vancouver Island might be one, would have chosen Esquimalt, leaving the navigation of the Gulf of Georgia to a class of small, safe and swift steamers. Lighthouses at least the colony must have. To Douglas, with the distrust of the foreigner which he could never wholly dismiss, the military protection of the colony was among the government's chief responsibilities. The *Satellite* which was placed on the coast-guard service in 1858 had been almost immediately withdrawn, and though the

admiral of the Pacific squadron had given what help he could, many boats had escaped the customs and several unlicensed miners had found their way to the diggings. The Royal Engineers, of course, had other and more pressing occupations than that of police duty. To these, and similar appeals, however, the colonial office had but one reply. It seemed inexplicable to Downing Street that a country whose sands were of gold and whose population had sprung up with such incredible rapidity should find the question of a revenue difficult. In vain Douglas pointed to the extraordinary difficulties presented in the opening up of the country; to the outflow of population, easily to be prevented if employment on the proposed works were available; and to the narrow means that were at the colony's disposal, especially in view of the high level of wages and prices which continued as long as free placer gold constituted the source of the country's prosperity. He was met only with repeated commendations to thrift and economy, it being left to his own sagacity to suggest how that policy could be exercised with the greatest safety. Again and yet again it was enunciated that both British Columbia and Vancouver Island must be self-supporting. He was at times even reproached with the slow progress made in road-building.

Over sanguine, it may be, the governor was, in his estimate of the speed with which the colony was likely to attain its full development, and of the

extent to which its progress would be helped by public works alone. Yet it is easy to perceive wherein the task of Douglas without help from England must have seemed as the making of bricks without straw. In the end, however, the conservative policy of the colonial office cannot be charged with having retarded a healthy growth. On one point of importance it was unquestionably right. The colony had no cause to burden its finances with the support of a military organization. The assistance which the admiralty was able in a regular way to afford proved entirely adequate to any need of this kind that arose, and the principle that if from England skill and discipline were sent the colony should furnish the raw material of a force, was at least well calculated to instil the habits of self-reliance and freedom. So also, a suggestion that a steamer should be supplied by Great Britain for the conveyance of troops and stores on the Fraser was abandoned without material inconvenience. To the appeal for lighthouses, which involved an expenditure of £7,000, a favourable answer was given —to the extent at least of one-half the cost and the loan of the whole amount, the colonies to assume the other moiety as a joint obligation.

On the whole it was an unmixed boon that the influence of the home government, in so far as it prevailed, was of this restraining character. No feature of the rule of Douglas aroused more lasting opposition than the lavish scale on which he

spent the income of the colony. It is true that very great achievements could be pointed to. Lawlessness was effectually suppressed—or rather, as has been seen, was never afforded the opportunity of raising its head; a self-supporting postal department was established; an assay office was founded and a mint projected; the navigation of the Fraser and Harrison rivers was improved; and, finally, communication with the mines, even with those of the remotest regions, was opened up and maintained on the efficient scale that has been noted. It was not to be supposed that results like these could be achieved without a struggle. The customs tax of ten per cent., and the license fees of the miners formed, in addition to the proceeds of land sales, the only sources of revenue. The taking out of licenses, as might have been expected, was avoided in every possible way by the miners, and the fees paid only upon compulsion. An attempt to collect a royalty on the gold output proved a failure, no means being at hand to compel the miners to announce their findings or to support the army of inspectors which would have been required to make an official surveillance effective. The whole led Douglas at one time to suggest an entire remodelling of the mining regulations under a plan by which the gold-fields might have been treated as Crown lands to be let in large or small allotments at a fixed rental. As the regulations stood, however, under the Act proclaimed in 1859, a not in-

considerable sum, despite evasions, was annually reaped by the colony. Nevertheless the end of the administration of Douglas found the colony burdened with a yearly increasing debt, its loans barely negotiable in the London market, and its tax rate risen to nearly £19 per capita annually, or about eight times the rate then prevailing in Great Britain. Only by the most stringent economies in the years immediately following was the credit of the community preserved, so that by 1871 the rate had been reduced to approximately £5, or by over two-thirds. On the other hand, it is to be borne in mind that without the investments made by Douglas the development of the interior would undoubtedly have been retarded, while the control of the government over the heterogeneous and foreign population might have been weakened to the point of danger.

The marked and plenary instructions of the colonial office with reference to the status of the Hudson's Bay Company in British Columbia, suggest some mention of the subsequent career of that corporation in the community with whose beginning it was so closely identified. The present is an appropriate connection in which to include a statement of this character, for of all the relations which the company bore to the colony those involving the question of finances were the most provocative of dispute, while the features of the rule of Doug-

las of which the government of Great Britain took closest cognizance were those which concerned his dealings with the company, his former master. The financial problem resolved itself into the question whether the colony should be responsible for the debts contracted by the company in the initial stages of its rule on Vancouver Island. The position assumed towards Douglas by the imperial government in the other matter had a very patent explanation. From his seventeenth year Douglas had breathed no other atmosphere than that of the great fur-trading monopoly. It was impossible that he should see from any other point of view. If specific instances were wanted, they were furnished by the acts with which on the first discovery of gold in the Fraser Valley he had sought to impose a tribute for the company on the development which immediately set in. It will be remembered that, on the occasion referred to, Douglas had proclaimed that for vessels other than those of the company to navigate the waters of the Fraser was an infringement of the company's rights; and that in a proposal which his government vetoed he would have bound the Pacific Mail Company to carry the company's goods and no others. For acts like these, the fact that his first commission as governor was held in conjunction with the office of chief factor, was to blame, rather than Douglas himself. But even when his direct connection with the company had been severed, a spirit of

partizanship was bound to continue and to render necessary the most stringent measures of prevention. How that spirit wrought in the bosom of the governor is well illustrated in a passage which occurs in one of his later despatches, which shows as much by its tone as by the words themselves, his attitude to his master of so many years:

"I will take the liberty," he wrote, "which I feel satisfied you will under the circumstances excuse, of correcting an erroneous impression which appears to pervade the public mind of England. I allude to the often asserted opinion that the Hudson's Bay Company have made an unjust and oppressive use of their power in this country, a statement which I can assure Her Majesty's government is altogether unfounded. On the contrary, it would be an easy matter to prove that they have been of signal service to their country, and that the British territory on the north-west coast is an acquisition won for the Crown entirely by the enterprise and energy of the Hudson's Bay Company. For, on commencing business operations in this quarter the whole coast was held by foreigners, and it is only since the year 1846 that the Hudson's Bay Company have derived any real protection from the license to trade, as until that epoch the trade was open to all citizens of the United States, in common with the Hudson's Bay Company. Perhaps you will excuse me saying this much, as a sense of justice leads me to exert the little influence

I possess in protecting from injustice men who have served their country so well. At this moment I am making use of Hudson's Bay Company's establishments for every public office; and to their servants, for want of other means, I commit in perfect confidence the custody of public money."

As to the internal history of the company after the lapse of its special privileges in 1859, a few words will suffice. On the retirement of Douglas, Dallas became the president of the Victoria board of management, of which Work and Dugald McTavish were the other members, Ogden having died in 1854. Work died in 1861, and as Dallas had been moved to Rupert's Land, McTavish succeeded to the command, with Finlayson and Tolmie on his board of advisers. In 1870, McTavish was tranferred to Montreal to fill a place left vacant by the rise of Donald A. Smith in the service, and James A. Grahame became the head of the board. After Grahame, followed William Charles in 1874, with Alexander Monro as manager of lands. But the building of the Canadian Pacific Railway, the inflow of population, and the imposition of the Canadian tariff, revolutionized the old conditions of the trade. Winnipeg became the centre of the Western Department as of other portions of the company's domain, the railway permitting frequent visits from the chief commissioner in charge. To-day a series of well conducted retail stores in the leading centres of population as

well as in the outposts of settlement are all that visibly remain, in the portions of the country that have been opened to industry, of the once all-powerful domination of the company in British Columbia.

At least one result of the early rule of the Hudson's Bay Company is so important as to warrant special mention. It may be laid wholly to its influence that the opening years of settlement in British Columbia were free from the terrible scenes of Indian outrage. How great was that good fortune may be understood by a glance at the mining history of California or the later chronicles of other of the western states. To the Indians of British Columbia the rush of 1858 took on the form of an armed and unprovoked invasion of their territory. As they had received payment previously for their furs, so now they demanded payment for the gold of their streams and mountains. Without the restraining influence of the company, the product of nearly half a century of intercourse centred now in Douglas as the Indians' trusted friend of many years, a war of extermination might easily have been launched against the whites, especially against the domineering and aggressive immigrants from the United States. Expeditions overland from Oregon in the early days of the inflow had been harassed and the stragglers cut off. On the Fraser, however, in spite of constant provocation from the

American miners, no outbreak occurred for some time. An incipient collision was caused in 1858 by the murder of two Frenchmen on the trail above the canyons of the Fraser, but a band of miners which forced its way to the forks of the Thompson put the enemy to flight and was followed by a second detachment which concluded a treaty of peace with over two thousand natives between Spuzzum and the Thompson. Douglas, who was on his way to the diggings at the time of the disturbance, did not deem further action necessary. He had on a previous occasion stood between the miner and the Indian with an impartiality that took count of provocation on either side. The native leader, a man of unusual energy of character and corresponding influence with his tribe, had been taken subsequently into the service of the government, where he proved exceedingly useful in the settlement of other difficulties. The justice of the governor, who reminded the gold-seekers at every turn that their position was one of sufferance under Her Majesty's government, that no abuses would be tolerated, and that the law would protect the Indian no less than the white man, was the most effective instrument that could have been devised in the interests of peace. In a short time the Indians were engaged in the digging of gold in perfect harmony with the other miners at wages ranging from three to five dollars a day. Two massacres perpetrated by the Chilcotins in 1864 were

almost the only later outbreaks that occurred. In other words, the fur trade had ceased to be, and the company had bequeathed to the industry that displaced it a docile and a useful native people.

Among the first difficulties of the commerce of the north-west coast, not the least was found in the surprising number of the native languages. Within the limited area of Oregon no less than twelve distinct linguistic stocks were represented, while many of these were further split up into dialects. All alike were remarkable for harshness and obscurity of pronunciation and construction, besides being spoken over a very restricted space. To provide some common means of communication became an immediate necessity, if barter were to be established at all. The result was that a trade language, called afterwards the "Chinook jargon," grew into existence. Though the foreigners took no pains to learn the native languages, it inevitably happened that at Nootka, at first the chief emporium of the trade, a few words of the dialect there spoken became known, while the Indians were made familiar with a few English or Spanish expressions. When the trade shifted to the Columbia, the Chinooks, quick at catching sounds, acquired the new vocabulary, and the jargon in this elementary form was in use among the natives at

[1] The opinion of ethnologists is that it originated before the coming of the whites, as a species of universal language, analagous to the signs language of the Indians of the plains.

as early a date as the visit of Lewis and Clark in 1804. Later, the Chinook language was drawn upon for additional words; the French-Canadian *voyageur* added his quota; and the jargon assumed a regular form, and became a means of general intercourse. In 1840, it contained about two hundred and fifty words, of which eighteen were of Nootka origin, forty-one were English, thirty-four French, and one hundred and eleven Chinook. By 1863 the number had doubled. Rude and formless as it was, it has been the source of great and varied benefits. Trade was made possible by it, friendly intercourse between the tribes was stimulated, many deadly feuds eliminated, and early missionary endeavour assisted. If not a model language, the jargon may at least have served to point the way to some higher invention for the uses of an advancing civilization.

The mention of the Indian and his jargon leads naturally to the subject of the missionary. How the Jesuits from Canada were among the first in Oregon has been already stated. From that time forward, the Roman Catholic Church has never ceased to labour in the vast field of the Pacific slope. Father Demers was on Vancouver Island prior to 1846. Before that, he had visited the Upper Fraser. When in 1847 he was made a bishop, his diocese included not only British Columbia, but Alaska as well. The first Protestant church in the colony was built by the Hudson's Bay Company at Victoria in 1855. The Methodist

Church sent its first missionaries to British Columbia in 1859. Thomas Crosby, the greatest name among them, arrived in 1862. Opening a school at Nanaimo in 1863, Crosby had soon extended his influence over one hundred and eighty miles of the coast, and over the Fraser valley as far as Yale. In 1874 he removed to Fort Simpson, whence in time the field was extended over one hundred and fifty miles to the north. A year before Crosby's arrival, the Presbyterian Church had begun the work of evangelization among the Indians and the miners. Perhaps the most signal achievement of the missionaries was that of William Duncan, a layman sent out in 1856 under the auspices of the Church of England Missionary Society, to the savage Tsimpsean tribes of the northern coast. At Metlakahtla near Fort Simpson a thriving industrial community sprang up where before the coming of the missionary the most degraded natives of the coast were given over wholly to violence and superstition. Duncan's aims were evangelistic purely, and the collision which occurred with his ecclesiastical superiors led to the removal of his colony to Alaska after a prolonged and bitter controversy. To the clergy of the Church of England and of the Methodist Episcopal Church, who first entered the field of missionary labour in British Columbia, Douglas assigned a church, school and dwelling-house site forming a block of four building lots, or about an acre of land in extent, in all towns

where they resided. He further recommended that free grants of one hundred acres of rural land should be made in aid of every cure in British Columbia. The Duke of Newcastle, however, with the experience of the Canadas in mind, while approving of the first arrangement, objected strongly to the practice of making free grants as endowments to livings.

While developments such as these were in progress in British Columbia, affairs on Vancouver Island were not devoid of incident. Victoria sank with the back-wave of the excitement of 1858, but rose again, this time on a more stable basis, with the discoveries of 1860-61 in Cariboo. The assembly met at leisurely intervals. Matter for a lengthy period of its debates was furnished in the proposed organization of a joint stock company to supply Victoria with water. Some useful wagon roads were built in the neighbouring district. A registration act was passed. Education received some attention. The miners temporarily resident in Victoria were placated, chiefly through the personal tact of the governor. With the increase in population and the growth of political issues, the need for newspapers was felt; and the *British Colonist* was founded in 1858, soon ranging itself, under the editorship of Amor de Cosmos, in an opposition, not always consistent, to the governor and the council. Among the early occasions of

this opposition was an incident which well illustrates the temper of the times, the character of Douglas and the nature of the rule which he maintained.

The legislative assembly of the colony had originally held its sessions in a building belonging to the Hudson's Bay Company, which served at once for the meetings of the House and as the offices of government. More commodious quarters becoming necessary, the governor proceeded to supply the want after the manner that seemed fitting. On due thought, the land beyond James Bay commended itself as a site, and a bridge was forthwith thrown across to connect it with the city. As the assembly was not asked for an appropriation (the Hudson's Bay Company as the proprietors of the island contributing the necessary funds under the arrangement of 1849 with the home government), its consent to the change was not deemed necessary. It soon appeared, however, that the assembly did not share this view. Resentment at the governor's attitude ran high, and, in a resolution passed to protest against the removal of the buildings, the action of Douglas was denounced as unconstitutional and a breach of privilege. The governor's reply was characteristic. The assembly had borne no share of the financial burden involved in this or other colonial improvements; as for the bridge, it was the plain prerogative of the Crown to build bridges wherever the public convenience demanded, provided that no private rights were invaded. He added

an explanation of the reasons which had dictated his choice of a site. The position of the governor, under the existing constitution of the colony, was impregnable, and the assembly had no alternative but to yield. It may be added that time has set its seal of approval on the governor's action ; and the present stately buildings of the province, erected in 1893, stand on the pleasant and convenient ground that was selected by Douglas half a century ago.

Other matters which engaged the attention of the island legislature in its early years were, the legalizing of United States currency, the payment of the liabilities of the colony, and the question of clergy reserves. The first was a plain necessity. In connection with the finances of the colony, the assembly from the first refused to become liable for the debts incurred during the régime of the Hudson's Bay Company, and the latter was left to settle its claims with the home government. The question of clergy reserves arose out of the original agreement between the Hudson's Bay Company and its clergyman on the island. Under this arrangement the major part (£300 of a total of £400) of the latter's stipend was to be derived from the sale of public lands at that time under the administration of the company. On the extinguishment of the company's title in 1859, the question of the continuance of this arrangement at once arose. The appointment of the then incumbent of the office had been intended, it appeared, as a per-

manent one; and it was necessary therefore to provide for his emolument. There can be little doubt that if it had not been for the prompt and almost violent antagonism which was manifested, the situation would have drifted imperceptibly into that of a state-supported clergy. A reserve in excess of two thousand acres had been already set apart in Victoria alone, and the appointment of a bishop and two other clergymen authorized by the home government. The House of Assembly, however, refused without popular warrant to confirm the continuance of the old arrangement; and in the end even the grant of one hundred acres which it was proposed to make to the clergyman of the company was reduced to thirty and transferred under trustees to the local church. His salary was thenceforth paid by the contributions of his congregation alone, supplemented by missionary funds sent out from England.

Shortly after this signal service to the colony, the first parliament of Vancouver Island was prorogued, the date being November, 1859. The elections followed in January, 1860, and the new House, of thirteen members, mĕt about two months later. Helmcken alone of the former assembly was re-elected; and he was continued in the Speaker's chair. The second legislature lasted until 1863, when it was succeeded by the third House, which in turn continued until the union of the two colonies in 1866.

THE SAN JUAN AFFAIR

To the period of the dual governorship belong the more important of an extended series of negotiations having to do with the interpretation and enforcement of the Oregon boundary treaty concluded in 1846. The San Juan affair (for by that title the incident in question is usually known) had its root, as will be understood, in times remote, and its final solution was not reached until some years after Douglas had closed his official career. It may be dealt with in its entirety here, as, apart from its intrinsic interest, it presents almost the sole view of Douglas, in the higher sphere of international politics, under stress of a delicate and at times dangerous situation.

It will be remembered that by the treaty of 1846, the 49th parallel of latitude had been accepted as the boundary between the United States and British territory from the Rocky Mountains to the centre of the channel which divides Vancouver Island from the mainland. From that point, it was agreed, the line was to continue by the middle of the channel southward to the Strait of Juan de Fuca, by the middle of which in turn it should proceed to the Pacific. Now, in the southern portion of the Gulf of Georgia, below the point at which the 49th parallel ceases as above to mark the frontier, the Haro archipelago occurs; and as a result of the configuration of these islands a choice of passages was offered by which the boundary might reach the lower waterway. At the time of

the treaty only two of these straits had been surveyed: the Canal de Haro, so named, as the archipelago itself was named, from the Spanish explorer,—a strait seven miles in breadth, between the group and Vancouver Island; and the channel to the east, of half the width, known as Rosario Strait,—otherwise as Vancouver Strait, Ringgold's Channel, or the Canal de Fidalgo. The question immediately presented itself as to which of these was intended to mark the boundary by the treaty of 1846, the point involving the ownership of the archipelago mentioned, made up of three large and several smaller islands, of which San Juan, the most valuable, contained about fifty thousand acres. Though both nations, through over twenty years of controversy, as wearisome as it was long drawn out, attempted to prove that a definite understanding existed at the time the treaty was agreed to, it is obvious that the language of 1846 left room for dispute and that neither of the governments in that year took cognizance of the exact path of the boundary as it passed from the Gulf of Georgia to the Straits of Juan de Fuca.

The various steps by which the issue became sharply defined, covering in all the first ten years of the dispute, were briefly as follows. About the time of the founding of Victoria, and as a part of the general policy involved in that development, the Hudson's Bay Company had landed a number of sheep and cattle on the Island of San Juan. The

colony prospered, and within a few years' time not less than several thousand head of live stock, including sheep, cattle, swine and horses, were included in the company's establishment. A salmon fishery also was erected in 1851, and the Americans who had already begun to frequent the island were warned to fish inshore. Thus matters remained for a year longer, when the legislature of Oregon proceeded to organize the archipelago, without reference to any political significance which the operations of the British company might have, as a portion of its domain. Again, in 1853, when the territory of Washington took form, the islands passed, or were regarded by the continental authorities as passing, under the new jurisdiction. No outward change in conditions, however, occurred until 1854 when an attempt to levy duties by the United States authorities on stock imported by the company led to a sharp dispute between the latter and the officer deputed to enforce the tax. This brought Douglas for a brief time on the scene, but had little effect beyond calling forth an idle assertion of sovereignty on the part of each nation. No actual collection was made at the time. In 1855, however, thirty or more sheep of the company were seized and sold at auction by the sheriff of Whatcom County, Washington. This at once brought the affair into international prominence; and in 1856 commissioners were appointed by Great Britain and the United States to examine

into the data bearing thereon. Pending the expected settlement, by order of the Secretary of State for the United States, no taxes were enforced on San Juan, though the island was not acknowledged as a British possession. A curious amenity during these early years was the protection cheerfully afforded by the company to the United States officials from the roving bands of Indians whose descents were always of peculiar danger to the "Boston" frontiersmen.

The commissioners appointed by Great Britain were Captains Prevost and Richards of the Royal Navy, the former of whom arrived in H.M.S. *Satellite* in June, 1857. The latter reached Victoria in H.M.S. *Plumper* a few months later and at once began an extended series of explorations and surveys for the carrying out of which he had been specially delegated. Mr. Archibald Campbell, with a staff of astronomers and engineers, represented the United States. By December, 1857, six formal meetings had been held by the commissioners, ending in a complete disagreement. The treaty, as interpreted by the British, demanded that the channel constituting the boundary from the 49th parallel southward should possess three characteristics: (1) it should separate the continent from Vancouver Island; (2) it should admit of the boundary being carried through it in a southerly direction; and (3) it should be a navigable channel. In the light of these requirements, it was urged against the

Canal de Haro and in favour of Rosario Strait that the former could not be said to separate Vancouver Island from the mainland, seeing that the separation was already effected by the other channel; that a line drawn through the Canal de Haro must perforce run westerly for a considerable distance; that though the Haro channel answered to the third demand, yet, from the rapidity and variableness of its currents and its lack of anchorages, it was less suitable for the navigation of sailing vessels than Rosario Strait, which was the channel followed by the vessels of the Hudson's Bay Company since 1825. The occupation of San Juan by the company for so many years was also held to bind the island to the British colony. On the other hand, the American commissioners contended that of the several navigable passages connecting the Gulf of Georgia with the Straits of Fuca, the Canal de Haro was preëminent in width, depth, and volume of water; that it was the one usually designated on the maps in use at the time the treaty was under consideration; that the other navigable channels through the archipelago separated mere groups of islands from each other; and that the Canal de Haro, since it washed the shores of Vancouver Island, was the only one that could be said to divide the continent from that island. The objection that the Canal de Haro would not throughout its entire course carry the boundary line in a southerly direction was not, in the American

view, well taken, seeing that the word "southerly" was applied in the treaty equally to the Straits of Juan de Fuca, the general course of which lay north by west. In brief, it appeared to the United States that the deflection of the boundary from the 49th parallel was sanctioned by the treaty with the intention of securing Vancouver Island alone to Great Britain and that with this broad principle in view the archipelago should be considered as belonging to the mainland and not to the great coastal island.

Two years had been consumed in these and other fruitless negotiations, for though a central passage navigable to ships had been discovered by the British survey party and proposed to the United States by way of compromise no tangible result had followed. Meanwhile a number of squatters, consisting mainly of American miners on their return from the Fraser diggings, had settled on San Juan Island. In the year 1859 they totaled some twenty-nine, as opposed to nineteen servants of the company. It was a collision between these diverse local interests that brought on the most acute phase of the dispute—a phase which but for the conspicuous tact of the British authorities on the spot might easily have plunged the nations into war.

It seems that an American named Cutler who had settled on the island in 1859 was much annoyed by the depredations of a hog belonging to

the Hudson's Bay Company, and had shot and killed the animal. Of the altercation which followed various accounts have survived. According to one, the arrest of Cutler and his removal to Victoria for trial was threatened. At least it was demanded by the company that a stipendiary magistrate should be stationed on the island. The then commander of the military department of Oregon was General Harney, a popular but injudicious officer, whose southern origin has led to the suspicion that on the eve of the war of secession he would have viewed with equanimity the sowing of strife between the United States and England. The news of the Cutler affair reaching his ears during a visit to San Juan, he accepted the version most unfavourable to the British authorities, and, without mandate from Washington, transferred a company of his command to the island, for the protection, as he alleged, of its American citizens. Other detachments followed until the troops on San Juan reached a total of four hundred and sixty-one, with eight thirty-two pounders. A request from the governor for the withdrawal of the force met with a peremptory refusal, in the first instance from Pickett, the officer in charge, and afterwards from Harney himself. A suggestion of a joint military occupation subsequently made by Douglas was also refused in terms that gave just grounds for indignation. At Victoria the excitement was for a time intense and the presence of the *Plumper*, *Satellite*, *Tribune* and other

British ships of war, having on board a force greatly superior to that which held San Juan, would easily, under the provocation of the moment, have precipitated an encounter but for the patience of those in command. Under the statesmanlike policy that was adopted, only a single vessel at a time was kept in San Juan harbour, for show of occupation, while the rest were held at a safe distance. When the details of the affair reached Washington, the fruits of this forbearance were quickly reaped. An official investigation was conducted on the spot; Harney was ultimately recalled; the officer who had given offence on San Juan was removed; the American troops were for the most part withdrawn; and an arrangement was entered into by which a force of British equal in numbers to those that were left were landed without opposition on the island. For twelve years the joint occupation was continued amid perfect harmony and good-will.

The dispute, thus stripped of the element of danger, continued for a short time longer to engage the attention of the British minister and the secretary of state at Washington, and then lapsed into oblivion with the outbreak of the American civil war. It revived for a moment in 1866; and in 1869 gathered so much notice as to suggest its reference to the president of the Swiss republic. It was still unsettled, however, in 1871, when a joint high commission met at Washington to consider this and other questions affecting the relations of the United

States and Great Britain in North America. After a renewed discussion, as interminable as the first, it was agreed that the whole affair should be submitted to the arbitration of the German Emperor. Prevost was again the British representative at Berlin, while Bancroft, the historian, acted for the United States. Reports of experts were obtained and the question was debated anew from every standpoint. Finally, the Emperor declared his award in favour of the United States. The date was October 21st, 1972. In British Columbia, where the result was accepted with equanimity, though not without keen sense of loss, the hand of time had wrought many changes since the excitement of 1859, and the colony was now a province of the young Dominion.

In the annual message of President Grant in the following year the award was hailed with special satisfaction as leaving the two countries for the first time in history without a question of disputed territory on this continent. The remark was premature. It was only shortly after that the boundary between Alaska and the Dominion was called in question, to remain a subject of negotiations until 1903. The Bering Sea dispute, moreover, had still to arise and run its fevered course until its settlement under the Paris award of 1897.[1]

It is also to the later years of the rule of Douglas, and to the history at large of the two colonies,

[1] See appendix "P"

that the wonderful story of Cariboo belongs. The tale has been often told. It is well worthy of telling by the historian of British Columbia, seeing that the Cariboo placers gave permanency, as the Fraser and Thompson diggings had given form, to the mainland colony. The bars of the Fraser, in fact, began to fail within a few months of their discovery. Population had no sooner reached its highest flow than it began to ebb. This was perhaps inevitable from the very magnitude of the movement. But into the spirit of the country, already sinking, new vigour was instilled at the magic bidding of gold. To the miners pushing on to the remote and inaccessible headwaters of the Fraser, where in their fancy lay the coarse metal of which the lower diggings held but the sandy effluent, the reward came in a series of finds that opened at once a new era in gold-mining. In the autumn of 1859 the first strikes on the Quesnel were reported. Richer and richer discoveries followed, and in six months the famous Cariboo rush of 1860 had begun. The excitement drew upon a much wider field than that of 1858, though it never brought so large and tumultuous an army. From the ends of the earth they came, by sea around Cape Horn, by the Isthmus of Panama (this being the favourite passage), and by caravan across the prairies. From Canada the route lay by Chicago to St. Paul, thence by water to Fort Garry, thence by the trails of the fur traders, a desperately difficult journey, as

the narratives of several parties attest. Rival agencies of transport to the diggings fought for the traffic; and frauds upon the ignorant abounded. For five years the inflow, though varying, was constant. Most important of all, the immigrants counted many well fitted by birth and training to give a solid basis to the country which was to be theirs long after every creek of the north had yielded up the lure that first attracted them.

The region thus forced upon the attention of the world may be roughly described as the high, wooded plateau that lies between the sources of the Fraser and the Thompson and is contained between the upper reaches of these waters as they move towards their junction. The Bear, the Willow, the Cottonwood and the Quesnel, radiating from the auriferous slate of the Snowshoe Mountains and falling into the Fraser, are its four great rivers, all alike famous from the wealth of the tributaries on which the diggings of the new field were established. It will be seen that the district penetrated into the very heart of New Caledonia, where, since the days of Conolly and Douglas, the Hudson's Bay Company had held the even and prosperous tenor of its way: first under the command of Dease, famous for his discoveries on the Upper Liard and for his Arctic voyages; later under Ogden, wit as well as trader and organizer, and destined, as we have seen, to a larger rôle in Oregon; and at the last under Manson, who for

twelve years of diminishing profits held the reins of power in that most desolate of all the company's dominions. Needless to add, the rush into the Cariboo, overflowing soon after to Omineca and Cassiar, sounded the death-knell of the fur trade, already thrust back from the southern districts by the events of the preceding years.

Apart from their richness, a radical change in the method of working contributed not a little to the success of the Cariboo placers. On the lower Fraser, the rocker and the sluice alone had been employed, and operations were confined almost wholly to the surface. In the Cariboo, deep mining was at once introduced; and by shafts, drifts, pumps and hoists the gold-laden earth was brought to the surface. So rich was the result that before the end of the second year two million dollars worth of coarse nuggets had been shipped to Victoria by the fifteen hundred miners of the district, and Cariboo had taken a secure place in history by the side of Ballarat and the Sacramento.

It would be impossible here to trace the steps by which the various camps were opened and the country stripped of its treasure. But the most famous must at least be named. Each creek had a history of its own. Quesnel Forks was the earliest locality to develop into a permanent camp. A party of five with two rockers took out a hundred ounces of gold in a single week, and mining at this point continued for several years. On Cedar and Horsefly

Creeks, southern tributaries of the Quesnel, several claims, among them the "Aurora," yielded equal returns. The movement spread also in 1860 to the Bear River. In January, 1861, came the extraordinary finds on Antler Creek, followed in the spring by those on the Harvey, Keithley, Cunningham and Grouse, all the latter streams flowing from the north into the Quesnel. The rush now overflowed to the Willow and the Cottonwood. Barkerville sprang up on Williams Creek in the midst of a district fabulously rich, and has since remained the centre of distribution in Cariboo. The Lowhee and Lightning Creek camps followed. In 1862 the number of miners had risen to five thousand and the output to three millions. Both of these totals were exceeded in 1863; but after 1864 population and gold alike began to decline. In 1867, however, there were still no less than sixty paying claims in operation, and several of the mines continued to produce for many years. In Omineca and Cassiar the excitement did not reach its height until 1871 and had subsided by 1875; but in no year were the results so extraordinary as in Cariboo, from which in the first seven years alone an aggregate yield of twenty-five millions was taken. The gold occurred chiefly in a deposit of blue clay underlying the beds of the creeks, many of which might literally be said to have been paved with the metal. Individual earnings were astounding. Over one thousand dollars a day were made by many. Six

hundred dollars to the single pan were recorded. One party took over seven hundred ounces in two days, and in two months had heaped up a hundred thousand dollars worth of gold. The difficulties were correspondingly enormous. Joined to the inaccessibility of the region, the shortness of the season and the terrible severity of the winters, the periodical floods and the depth at which the gold occurred made the workings all but impossible to the average gold-miner. Prices in the early days, when means of transportation in the winter were limited to dog sleds between Alexandria and Antler, rose to an extraordinary level. Flour was $72 per barrel; beans 45 cents per pound ; and bacon 68 cents per pound. To this the end came with the construction of the Cariboo wagon road. On the whole, it is believed that of the army which invaded Cariboo during 1860-63 one-third returned with nothing, one-third with moderate earnings and the rest with independent fortunes. Terrific feats of endurance were recorded of the men who under the spell of the gold mania struggled against the tangled forests, the yawning canyons and the precipitous mountains covered with snow which made up the region; struggled, too, against the starvation of body and soul that was the miners' lot, bereft as they were of kindly human intercourse, ruled by the law of the beast, and in the end doomed either to disappointment, or, if success were won, to the folly or viciousness that too often seemed its necessary part.

Truly if the web of that story is of romance, the woof is of tragedy. Yet it was here the colony struck root; and almost every name in its early annals, excepting those of the fur traders, is associated with the stirring history of the gold-fields of Cariboo.

It was in the year in which the first decline in Cariboo became apparent that the active connection of Douglas with the administration of the two colonies terminated. In the case of Vancouver Island his commission lapsed through the efflux of time in September, 1863. The occasion was marked by popular demonstrations unmistakably sincere; and the crowning honour of his career came in the knighthood conferred upon him by the Queen. He was succeeded by Arthur Kennedy, Esq., who took up the duties of office in the following March. In connection with the retirement of Douglas from the governorship of the mainland colony, which did not occur until 1864, a number of incidents of first importance in the history of the colony require to be mentioned.

As early as 1861, the dual governorship had caused dissatisfaction in British Columbia. Narrow as was the authority of the assembly of Vancouver Island, it was at least a visible recognition of the people's inherent right to govern. On the mainland nothing of the sort existed, the governor being the maker, as, with the assistance of the officials sent from England, he was also the administrator, of the

laws. Sectional jealousy, especially that of the leading towns, rather than any deeply reasoned wish for similar institutions, led to an agitation, and the feeling eventually took form in a petition which asked among other things for the establishment of a representative assembly. It will be of interest to note what were regarded by the residents of the lower Fraser as the chief grounds for criticism of the manner in which their government was administered. As described by Douglas himself in his official report on the matter they were as follows :

1. That the governor, colonial secretary and attorney-general did not reside permanently in British Columbia.

2. That the taxes on goods were excessive as compared with the population (the latter being estimated at seven thousand, exclusive of Indians) and were in part levied on boatmen, who derived no benefit from them. The absence of a land tax was also complained of.

3. That the progress of Victoria was stimulated at the expense of British Columbia, and that no encouragement was given to shipbuilding, the leading industry of New Westminster, or to the foreign trade of the colony.

4. That money had been injudiciously spent on public works, and that contracts had been given without public notice, with the result that they were subsequently sublet at a much lower rate.

5. That faulty administration had been made of the public lands, several sections which had been declared public reserves having been afterwards claimed by parties connected with the colonial government.

6. The want of a registry office for the recording of transfers and mortgages was pointed out.

The reply of the governor to the first of these complaints was, that he had spared no exertion in his divided duty to promote the interests of both colonies, and that he had not consciously neglected any opportunity of adding to the prosperity of either. As for the other members of the executive, their offices, if confined to British Columbia alone, would be little better than sinecures. The taxation of the colony as compared, for example, with that of the neighbouring state of Washington, was not excessive, and had been spent on roads and public works in a manner that had materially reduced the general cost of living; moreover the population including Chinamen was ten thousand, or, including Indians (who, inasmuch as they were becoming more and more consumers of imported goods, were entitled to be classed with the other inhabitants), some thirty thousand, so that the rate was £2 per capita instead of £7 10s. as complained of. The remission of duty on shipbuilding material, it was pointed out, would open the door to injustice and discontent, and would do little good to New Westminster as long as the timber business re-

mained a monopoly in the hands of a few persons. Clauses four and five were declared to be wholly unfounded. With regard to the final grievance, a measure providing means for the registration of real estate, the governor promised, would be passed at the earliest moment practicable, the delay having arisen only through the peculiar difficulties of the situation.

On the broad question of the adoption of representative institutions, Douglas was of the opinion that the fixed population of the colony was too small and of too motley a character to render the experiment feasible. The British residents were few in number; there was no manufacturing or farming class; the lumbering and salmon-curing industries which to-day are so important in the Fraser valley had not yet been called into existence; and the traders who constituted the only body in the colony which was not migratory had comparatively a small interest in its development. As a matter of fact New Westminster had in 1862 only one hundred and sixty-four male adults, Hope but one hundred and eight, and Douglas but thirty-three; and these were the only centres which had definitely expressed approval of the change. The governor's avowed intention had been to proceed by degrees to the establishment of popular institutions, through the formation of municipal councils to serve as training schools for the people prior to the adoption of the larger idea of a colonial assembly.

There was, in fact, a radical difference in the position of the two colonies at this early time of which the discontent on the mainland took too little account. The island had the trades, professions and real estate of its inhabitants on which to levy taxes. British Columbia had its gold alone; and a duty on the supplies carried inland formed its most obvious means of revenue. The imposition of a tariff had the advantage also of arousing no opposition from the miners, who were the sole support of the colony, and whose requirements in the way of roads rendered a large expenditure necessary. A free trade policy, on the other hand, was essential to Victoria, barred as the city was from the mother country by distance and from the United States by a hostile tariff, in order that the British Columbia market at least might fall to her share. She was the centre of population, the seat of trade, the nucleus of colonization, and the chief source of revenue in the British settlements of the Pacific; to maintain this position it was necessary that she should remain the general marketing place of those possessions. The position of the governor, therefore, if it afforded a unique opportunity from the standpoint of the colonies' interests as a whole, was of no ordinary difficulty in view of the opposing policies which it was his duty if possible to reconcile.

The arguments which Douglas advanced on the occasion of the discontent of 1861 did not ultimate-

ly prevail. When the day of his retirement arrived in 1863, the colonial office lost no time in deciding that separate governors for the colonies were a necessity. The decision may have been prompted by the difficulty of securing an officer equal to the task of Douglas; but it was still more largely due to the inherent weakness of the original arrangement. So, also, it was resolved that at least the first step towards the adoption of representative institutions must be taken without further delay. The suggestion of Douglas that the end should be reached through the formation of municipal councils was not approved; but at least it was perceived, though with avowed reluctance, that the approach to an elective assembly must be gradual. The avenue which suggested itself was the organization of a legislative council on a somewhat novel basis. The power of nominating the council was to be vested in the governor; but he was directed at the same time to so exercise that power as to constitute of the council a partially representative body. This end, it was thought, would be secured if one-third of the council was to consist of the executive, one-third of magistrates from different parts of the colony, and the balance of representatives of the people. The plan, it was admitted, did not overcome the difficulties arising out of the migratory nature of the population; but it was preferred with its imperfections to any untried arrangement. The matter of evolving a working plan for securing the

popular representation,—whether by ascertaining informally the opinion of the residents in each locality, by bringing the matter before public meetings, or (as in Ceylon) by accepting the nominee of certain corporate bodies or societies,—was left to the wisdom of the governor. To inaugurate the scheme an extension of one year's time was made to the commission of Douglas as governor of British Columbia.

The fact that the truest interests of the colonies lay in union was not overlooked by the government of Great Britain in advising this arrangement. Economy and efficiency of administration, the development of political capacity, and the promotion of commerce, called with one voice for solidarity. In salaries alone the saving would have been considerable. In each, the governor received £3,000, and the chief-justice £1,200. The colonial secretary received in Vancouver Island £600, and in British Columbia £800; the attorneys-general, £300 and £500, respectively; the treasurers, £600 and £750, respectively; and the surveyors-general, £500 and £800, respectively. In addition, British Columbia had a collector of customs at £650; a chief inspector of police at £500, and a registrar of deeds at £500. Douglas in a despatch written a few months before the end of his official term strongly advocated union. For the time, however, local prejudices proved too strong; and Frederick Seymour, formerly governor of Honduras, was appointed

to succeed Sir James in the governorship of British Columbia.

In a previous chapter the words were given of the address with which Douglas as governor of Vancouver Island opened the first assembly of that colony. The speech with which he greeted the first meeting of a representative body on the mainland, is of no inferior interest as reflecting current opinions and conditions. The date was January 21st, 1864. The withholding of popular institutions, he declared, during the infancy of the colony, had been prompted only by regard for its happiness and prosperity. A vigorous prosecution of public works was urged for the purpose of giving value to the waste lands of the colony. For the increase of population public lands had been thrown open to settlement, and every effort made to promote the development of the country, though thus far with unsatisfactory results. From the Indians, favourable reports had been received; reserves based on a maximum allowance of ten acres for each family had been already set aside for them. The opening of postal and telegraphic communications between British Columbia and the head of Lake Superior was foreshadowed. Appropriations for education and religious purposes were recommended, with a disclaimer added of any desire to see an endowed church in the colony. Finally, the expenditures of the past year, amounting in all to £192,860 (of which £83,937 had been spent on roads and £31,615

on civil establishment) were laid before the council. The revenue to meet this was but £110,000 of which over half was derived from customs dues. Of the deficit, £65,805 had been met by loans, a sum which still left £17,055 to be accounted for, besides an additional £10,700 due to the imperial government for the expenses of the Royal Engineers. For 1864, the expenditures were estimated at £107,910 and the income at £120,000, though no provision was made in the former for the maintenance of a gold escort or for the erection of further public works. The address concluded with an appeal to the council for advice on this pressing problem of finances.

It will be of interest to notice, before leaving this part of the subject the steps by which the union, after over three years of further intermittent discussion, was achieved. In the beginning the movement was confined entirely to Vancouver Island, where by the year 1865 it had gathered not a little force, the assembly voting strongly in its favour and being willing to leave the question of a constitution unreservedly to the home government. The relations of council and assembly in the island colony had not been altogether happy. There was no medium between the governor and the assembly, and the time of the council was occupied for the most part in correcting the mistakes and undoing the crude legislation of the lower house. The decline of trade

which accompanied the exhaustion of the bars of the Fraser, and the fact that the Cariboo mines were never a poor man's diggings and therefore did not attract more than a comparatively small population, had also led in large part to the dissatisfaction felt in Victoria, where the most of the supplies for the mines were sold. Victoria, moreover, had had no share in the important developments which followed in 1864 the discoveries of the Kootenay district, situated about five hundred miles due east of New Westminster and yielding for a time during the "Big Bend" rush, a total revenue to the public treasury of not less than £1,000 a week. The entire supplies for these were secured by the way of New Westminster or the Columbia. The mines even attracted many from Victoria's best customer, Cariboo.

On the other hand there were several reasons why the mainland colony should for the time look askance upon the idea of union. The year 1865 was one of exceptional progress in the opening up of the country. The trail from the Fraser to Kootenay, surmounting three ranges of mountains and not only affording access to the mines but establishing a new route through the Kootenay pass from the Pacific to the Hudson's Bay lands beyond the mountains, was in itself a work which might well infuse self-confidence even into a struggling colony. By the end of 1865 New Westminster was connected with the whole telegraphic system of the United States,

Canada and Newfoundland, and with Cariboo. The constitution of 1863 had been successfully placed in operation, the popular candidates being elected at public meetings called by the magistrates. But the real opposition to union lay in the rivalry of Victoria and New Westminster for the honour of being chosen as the capital, and the fear which the latter had of being supplanted by the older, wealthier and more influential community. Being almost the sole municipality which found a voice, New Westminster was able for some time to combat successfully all agitation for union. The upper country cared little whether the colonies were one or separate. But on the lower Fraser it came at last to be felt that the uncertainty was interfering seriously with progress.

In 1866, a petition in favour of union was signed by four hundred and forty-five persons, and there was probably a much wider feeling had it been able to make itself heard. In the end the British government decided the question, and the authority of the executive government and council of British Columbia was extended over Vancouver Island, the number of members of the council being increased to twenty-three. The customs regulations of the mainland colony were likewise extended to the island. Other ordinances remained for a time as before. The original authority of the governor to make regulations for peace, order and good government was not restricted. The Act bore date of August

6th, 1866. A short time after, the attorney-general of Vancouver Island introduced a bill for assimilating its laws with those of British Columbia. There then remained only the question of the seat of government—a rock which the Act of union had discreetly avoided. Amid the violent altercations of partisans, the choice fell on Victoria, and though the bitterness of the defeat rankled long on the mainland no effort subsequently availed to secure a reversion of the decision.

The foregoing outline of the process by which British Columbia, as we know it to-day, attained its united form, has gone somewhat beyond the time when the man who had brought order out of the chaos and had been the chief agent in shaping the progress of the colony in the course it has since pursued, laid down the direction of its affairs. With the setting in active motion of the forces which resulted in union, Sir James Douglas passed from the scene. It is a moment of solemnity, for communities as for individuals, when the past is cast off forever. How large a part was Douglas of all that had happened since the birth of the two colonies has been sufficiently shown. But there was an added reason why his retirement at this time was of no ordinary significance, little though the change was marked by outward or immediate results. The spirit of that old time force, the Hudson's Bay Company, which had been the first to conquer the

tremendous barriers by which nature has divided the Pacific slope from the rest of the continent, which had subdued the intractable native, and had opened the first pathway for civilization to the western ocean, lived and breathed in Sir James Douglas. It died only with his passing. The change was for better things, as the future was soon to show, but that this was possible is a tribute to the wisdom with which the foundations had been laid.

It is left to treat of the remaining years of Douglas and to estimate the value of his work and personality in the founding of British Columbia. In connection with that task it will be well to note in very brief review the leading features of the later history of the colony, especially those that have their visible root in the era of colonial administration, in order the better to appreciate the nature of that early planting from which the present fruitful harvest has sprung.

CHAPTER IX

CONFEDERATION

AFTER toil,—rest. Long before the period of his commissions had expired, Douglas had made up his mind: his public connection with the colonies must cease. No one was more conscious than he that his day of greatest usefulness was past, and that his present office, if continued, would be one only of increasing difficulties. For a place in the new régime he had no inclination. Accustomed as he had been to untrammelled rule, he could play no part in the turmoil of reconstruction and divided power which was now approaching, and which was still to last for several years before the people of British Columbia achieved entire control of their administration.

The retirement of Sir James Douglas from the governorship of the two colonies was marked by all those forms and ceremonies with which the man of public affairs is wont to pass from the scene of his activity, and which may mean much or little. There had undoubtedly arisen a deep-rooted opposition to the principle of irresponsible government in British Columbia and to Douglas as the representative of that principle. Yet in the mass of customary laudation with which his days of office closed, the note of gratitude for the unequalled experience which he

had brought to the service of the country and for the value of the work he had done was persistently present, even in the minds of those who realized most clearly the necessity for change. There were banquets and processions, presentations of memorials and tributes of the press. The formula was repeated in the respective capitals of the colonies. At Victoria, two hundred of the leading citizens of Vancouver Island took their seats at a dinner in his honour; in New Westminster, where settlement was less compact, seventy-five. Both colonies presented addresses signed by hundreds of their inhabitants to the Duke of Newcastle, colonial secretary, in which admiration of the governor was warmly expressed. The legislature of Vancouver Island declared its belief that the signal prosperity which the colony had enjoyed was "mainly ascribable to the policy which His Excellency inaugurated," the governor characteristically replying with an exhortation to harmony between the executive and the legislature. So, likewise, the council of Vancouver Island placed on record its high estimation of the policy of Douglas "in originating and administering the government" of the colony, of his appreciation of his duties and responsibilities, and of the moral qualities which had adorned his actions and endeared him to the people of the island. In Victoria, the universal respect in which the governor was held had kindled into an affection which was plainly manifest in the demon-

strations with which his departure was accompanied. Twenty-two years from the time that the natives of Camosun first saw the harbour ruffled by the *Beaver*, Douglas passed through the streets of the city he had founded on his last official progress, the people thronging the way and crowding to grasp his hand as the guns of the fort pealed their farewell salute. On the mainland, where he was at one time regarded as the natural enemy of the colony, it is of significance to quote the following from an address which was presented at New Westminster and which bore the names of over nine hundred of the inhabitants:

"During the period His Excellency has been in office, he has assiduously devoted his remarkable talents to the good of the country; ever unmindful of self, he has been accessible to all, and we firmly believe that no man could have had a higher appreciation of the sacred trust vested in him, and none could have more faithfully and nobly discharged it than he has.

"The great road system which Governor Douglas has introduced into the colony is an imperishable monument of his judgment and foresight. It has already rendered his name dear to every miner, and future colonists will wonder how so much could have been accomplished with such small means. The colony already feels the benefit resulting from his unwavering policy in this respect, and year by year will the wisdom of that policy become more manifest.

"During his term of office the laws have ever been rigidly, faithfully and impartially administered; the poorest man has always felt that in a just cause he would not have to seek redress in vain, and the country has in consequence enjoyed a remarkable exemption from crime and disturbance."

It was in reply to this that Douglas uttered the words that sum up, better than any other of his own that have survived, the total of his endeavour as governor: "This is surely the voice and heart of British Columbia. Here are no specious phrases, no hollow or venal compliments. This speaks out broadly, and honestly, and manfully. It assures me that my administration has been useful; that I have done my duty faithfully; that I have used the power of my sovereign for good, and not for evil; that I have wronged no man, oppressed no man; but that I have, with upright rule, meted out equal-handed justice to all."

Among the most persistent opponents of the administration of Douglas was Amor de Cosmos, founder and editor of the Victoria *Colonist*. Few names in western history are more widely known. Beneath the eccentricity which was his most marked outward characteristic, and of which the changing of his name in that wild and free society was a conspicuous example, lay a genuine public spirit and a dogged resolution in resisting what he deemed to be abuses. Born in Nova Scotia, where the fight

for responsible government was early fought and won, and by nature combative to a degree, he found in the form of administration existing in British Columbia, a condition which kindled within him all that fierceness of political invective of which he was the accomplished master. Here was not only government without a legislature and without a ministry, but government by a man as autocratic by instinct and training as by the ordinance from which his power was derived. To de Cosmos, not free from opportunism and seeking now the pathway to his own future, Douglas was the mere embodiment of the Hudson's Bay Company's influence carried forward into an era in which it had no place, and in which it could work only for evil. From the embittered warfare waged daily in the columns of the *Colonist*, an organized party took form in opposition to every act of the governor, an opposition which was soon extended to the mainland, and which was silenced only with the inauguration of popular government in 1871. Among the friends of the retiring governor, de Cosmos, therefore, could not be reckoned. His tribute, accordingly, to the personal worth of Douglas was of no ordinary value when in the *Colonist* of October 13th, 1863, he wrote as follows:—

"We have conceived it our duty, upon some occasions, to differ from the policy pursued by Mr. Douglas, as governor of this colony, and we

have, from time to time had occasion, as public journalists, to oppose that policy: we trust, however, that such opposition has at no time been factious—personal to the governor himself it has never been. If we have opposed the measures of government, we have never, i our criticism of the public acts of the executive head of that government, failed in our esteem for the sterling honesty of purpose which has guided those acts, nor for the manly and noble qualities and virtues which adorn the man. The intimate relations which have so long existed between Sir James Douglas and the people of Victoria will shortly undergo a change, and we are quite sure that we echo the sentiments of the public of Victoria in saying that His Excellency will carry into private life the honest esteem and hearty good wishes of all Vancouver. His services to his country as governor of these colonies will not be forgotten for many years to come."

It may be of interest to mention here that from 1863 until 1866 the desire for the annexation of the colonies outrode all other sentiments in Vancouver Island, and that de Cosmos himself was among the most persistent advocates of unconditional union, notwithstanding that the change involved for the time the acceptance of administration by the Crown.

The ceremonies of leaving office ended, Douglas was free to carry out the dream of many years—a

voyage to Europe. There is little of public interest in the journey; but a diary in which he kept a daily record of his movements and impressions throws a singularly valuable light upon his tastes and sympathies, the variety of his information, and many of his views on public affairs. Conspicuous throughout are his affection for his family, the fervour of his religious convictions, the characteristic love of a Scotchman for his native country, and the wide range of subjects in which he had an interest. Leaving Esquimalt in May, he sailed by way of Panama for Southampton, the voyage as he covered it exceeding ninety-six hundred miles. The summer and early autumn were spent in England and Scotland, where he visited one of his daughters in the vicinity of Inverness, and the rest of the year in France, Switzerland, Germany and the Netherlands. The south of France, Spain and Italy were visited in the opening months of the following year. In March he was in Rome, where the first attack of an illness which was to give him much anxiety was recorded. His active life in the open and his severely regular habits had hitherto made disease unknown to him; the derangement of the heart to which he finally fell a victim was constitutional or perhaps induced by the strenuous early life of the fur traders, many of whom though vigorous in the extreme failed to reach old age. But the mind of Douglas, even in Italy, was never far away from the land to which he had given his

life. At Villetri, near Rome, on the 6th of March, he sees "rocky land covered with brush, places which recall the narrow little vales between the ridges of Work's farm near Victoria"; and again, "a cloudy sky, a short sprinkling of rain, the low springing grass, the damp earth and the brave little daisy are not unlike early March scenes in Victoria." From Italy he passed again through Germany to Paris where the news of the death of a daughter plunged him in deep affliction. From France he returned to London and in a few months more had arrived at Victoria, no longer to bear an active part in public affairs.

The rest of the life of Douglas was uneventful. In the management of his private fortune, in constant reading, and in the out-door exercises that had been his passion during the busiest part of his career, the days went by. He died on August 1st, 1877. The end came suddenly, though not without premonition, from heart failure. The funeral was a notable event in the history of the province. Especially striking were the tributes of the Indians to whom he was indeed the friend they held him. His wife was laid by his side in 1891.

Before the day of his passing, Douglas had lived long enough to witness not a little of the growth which sprang directly from his sowing, and at least the promise of that greater fruitage which the future

was to yield. It will be well, before attempting any final estimate of the man and his work, to turn for a moment to the more important of the developments that followed his retirement from public life and to the general course of progress since in British Columbia.

On December 17th, 1867, the legislature of British Columbia assembled for the first time at Victoria. The influence of Seymour, who had succeeded to the governorship of the united colonies, had hitherto retained for New Westminster this coveted distinction. Having yielded in one matter, the governor and the opinion which he represented saw fit to bow to the majority in another and more important. No sooner had the confederation of the eastern colonies become an accomplished fact, than the admission of British Columbia to the Dominion of Canada was keenly debated. The governor opposed it. A small party which favoured annexation with the United States opposed it. The body of office-holders opposed it vigorously. At the first, the activity of these succeeded in shelving the question. Nevertheless, as early as March, 1868, a resolution passed the council in favour of the union, provided fair and equitable terms could be obtained. Public meetings at Victoria, Barkerville and other points, soon after gave solid endorsation to the project. The sympathy of the Dominion itself was obtained, with special reference to the taking over of the intervening territory. A confederation

league was formed and a convention held under its auspices at Yale. Here, perhaps for the first time, the movement found its full voice, the existing form of government being denounced as a despotism for which the only remedy was asserted to be the immediate admission of British Columbia into the Dominion and the establishment of responsible institutions.

But the most potent of all the arguments for union was the promise which it held out of promoting overland communication with Canada. This it was that finally silenced the opposition of Seymour. In any event, the death of the governor in 1869 led to the appointment of an avowed advocate of confederation, Anthony Musgrave, previously governor of Newfoundland, and with an experience of administration gained in the West Indies. A tour of the colony which the new officer immediately undertook confirmed the view that the overwhelming sentiment of the population was in favour of confederation. On the back of this came formal instructions from England that the governor should take such steps as he properly and constitutionally could, either in conjunction with the governor-general of Canada or otherwise, to promote the favourable consideration of the question. When the council, which had been reconstituted in 1869, met for the session of 1870, Musgrave had a series of resolutions prepared for its consideration. In a memorable debate

which began on March 9th, 1870, and lasted until the twenty-fifth, the terms on which British Columbia should become a part of the Dominion were definitely determined. On July 7th, the news was received from Ottawa that the articles had been agreed upon, the construction of the transcontinental railway guaranteed, and the delegates who had been sent to present the claims of the province already on their way home.

The provisions upon which British Columbia entered confederation ensured in the first place that the Dominion should assume all debts and liabilities of the colony, allowance being made for the small amount of these compared with the original indebtedness of the other provinces. For the support of the provincial government an annual subsidy of thirty-five thousand dollars, with an additional grant of eighty cents per head on an estimated population of sixty thousand was promised, the latter allowance to be increased *pro rata* until the population reached four hundred thousand. Canada was to defray all charges in respect to the salaries of the lieutenant-governor and of the judges of the Superior and County or District Courts—likewise of the department of customs, the postal and telegraph services, the fisheries, the militia, the geological survey, the penitentiary, the marine department, the care of the Indians and other matters appertaining to the general government. A fortnightly steam mail service between Victoria and San

Francisco, and a weekly service with Olympia, were to be maintained by the Dominion. But the portion of the agreement which was of most absorbing interest to British Columbia, was that which set forth in detail the terms on which the railway across the continent, now the dream of every section of the community, should be built, and which provided in brief that it should unite the seaboard of British Columbia with the railway system of Canada and that its construction should be begun within two years of the date of union, the province conveying the necessary public lands along the line in trust to the Dominion government. The Dominion also guaranteed the interest for ten years on a maximum sum of £100,000 to be expended on the construction of a graving dock at Esquimalt. The new province was given three seats in the senate and six in the House of Commons. Finally, it was agreed that the constitution of the executive authority and of the legislature of British Columbia should continue until altered under the British North America Act, it being understood that the Dominion government would consent to the introduction of responsible government when desired by the people of British Columbia, and that it was the intention of the British Columbia government to amend the existing constitution of the legislature by providing that a majority of its members should be elective. The union was to take place on a date to be fixed by

Her Majesty on addresses from the legislature of British Columbia and of the parliament of Canada, the former being granted leave to specify in its address the electoral districts for which the first election of members to serve in the House of Commons should take place.

The document containing the terms of union reached Victoria on July 18th, 1870. Meantime a representative had been despatched to England to secure the needed change in the constitution of the colony and the guarantee of the imperial government for the completion of the Canadian Pacific Railway. For the election of the new council, which for the first time in the history of the united colonies was preponderatingly representative in character, the colony was divided into eight electoral districts, consisting of Victoria City, Victoria district, Nanaimo, New Westminster, Hope, Yale and Lytton, Lillooet and Clinton, and Cariboo and Kootenay. Of these, Victoria city returned two members. The elections were held in November, and the council met in January, 1871. The chief work of the session was, of course, the ratification of the terms of union previously agreed upon. This done, an Act was passed abolishing the council and establishing a legislative assembly in its stead, the latter to be elected once in every four years and to consist of twenty-four members chosen by twelve electoral districts. Thus it was effected that responsible government should come into operation at the

first session of the legislature subsequent to the union with Canada. A Qualification and Franchise Act was passed and the council prorogued on March 28th. On the same date, the resolutions for the admission of the colony were moved in the Canadian House of Commons, and, after a four days' discussion, were adopted. On July 1st, 1871, the first Dominion Day was celebrated in British Columbia.

On the whole, the new province brought to the Dominion a dower of no ordinary richness in the way of accomplished development and of promising outlook for the future. From the lavish expenditures of the early years a system of retrenchment and economy had been evolved, while the permanent results of these expenditures remained. Roads had been opened. Agriculture had been planted; it was estimated that not less than one hundred and twenty-five thousand acres, valued at from two dollars and a half to five dollars per acre, were available for cultivation. The mining industry of the province was already famous throughout the world, while it was known that not a tithe of its richness had been revealed. Even manufactures were assuming importance. Trade had reached a volume of over $3,400,000 a year. The labour market was in a promising condition, unskilled workmen being in good demand at wages of two dollars and a half per day and upward. The Indian question had been placed on a satisfactory basis. The Hon. J. W.

Trutch, distinguished for many years past in the councils of the colony, became the first lieutenant-governor, under auspices that promised to the mind of every inhabitant the beginning of a golden era for the province.

CHAPTER X

THE ACHIEVEMENTS OF DOUGLAS

HOW, then, shall we of the present, looking before and after, pass judgment on James Douglas? Let us begin with a definition. Let us recall the scale on which he wrought and something of the essential nature of his task, and so preserve our sense of proportion. It was not what one would call a great scale; it was not, by several standards, a great task. We are apt to be confused by the vastness of the raw materials of statehood which passed through his hands, and so forget the smallness of the human part in its beginning, the few points at which it touched its immense background of nature, and the simple and elementary character of the polity which first arose. Far off and isolated as the colony was, and closely guarded by the sovereign power, here were no problems, save at widest intervals, touching the rival interests of nations; to make the obvious comparison with the eastern colonies, there was here no feud of ruling races to allay, no Family Compact to uproot, no Clergy Reserve to divide, no complicated fiscal policy to arrange. If difficulties such as these arose, even in rudimentary form, they were settled apart from Douglas, or their settlement deferred. He ante-

dated the real political development of British Columbia, and he dealt with no inherited conditions.

The truth is, he was almost wholly an administrator. Risen to be the leader of the great commercial enterprise which had thrust its roots so deeply into that virgin soil, the process of events which made him ruler under the Crown in British Columbia was, when all is said, a change of masters primarily. While varying the ends to be attained, and the means with which to secure them, it made no vital alteration in those methods and principles by which he had been wont to govern all his actions. The establishment of discipline and order among the miners of the Fraser valley, the framing of the rules by which the single occupation of the inhabitants might be carried on, the building of roads, the founding of cities, the financing of the system as a whole—such were his practical cares. It was as if some huge and novel enterprise, reared upon the basis of a past that had vanished as if at a word, were placed for its development in his charge, his powers unlimited in all the multifarious concerns of management, but subject in their larger action to the plans, the policy and the approval of its original creator. The difficulties and responsibilities of his position were indeed very great; had they fallen into hands less competent, had they fallen even into other hands at all, it might almost be said they would have carried confusion if not disaster to the colony. Yet with it all

the work of Douglas was that of a builder and organizer, not that of an architect and creator in the fashioning of British Columbia.

We will do well, then, to remember that of statesmanship in the broad and usual sense the career of Douglas does not furnish an example. How, in truth, should he have been a statesman? From the days of his youth he had had to deal with naked fact—with the struggle first for bare existence, and later with the fierce and merciless rivalry against which he had fought his way, step by step and with a stern enjoyment, until he stood free and in full mastery of the huge concern to which he had bound his fortunes. Alert and studious as he was, there was still a great gulf fixed between a training such as that and an apprenticeship to liberal statecraft. Moreover, to repeat, it was not to the exercise of statecraft he was called. In the emergency of 1858, Douglas had qualities of a value to the country greater than any working knowledge of the principles of constitutionalism. From the school of forty years' service in the Hudson's Bay Company he had derived an experience—minute as it was comprehensive, and wholly without parallel on the north-west coast—of every problem of the British Columbia wilderness. That stern devotion to his duty, that perfection of the organizing faculty, and that absolute mastery of detail which at all times characterized the mind of Douglas, were a part of what the company had

taught him. Gifts wholly personal were his tact, his resourcefulness, his judgment, and the firmness with which he could enforce his decisions. Above all, he had the power, both by nature and by training, of ruling men. He was the one man of his time and place of whom as much could be said. If, therefore, we shall find him often wrong in matters that lay beyond his experience—narrow in his attitude toward the foreigner, the British policy of no discrimination being for long beyond his grasp; prone to precipitation in certain phases of the affair of San Juan; mistrustful ever of popular government (being, to a degree beyond that of the ordinary idealist, a believer in benevolent despotism); opposed even to confederation in his later years;—and while we shall have reason often to rejoice that the imperial curb was present in his administration; we shall never see him at a loss in any matter of the actual management of the colony or without the courage of his convictions when he felt himself on ground which was his own. And that is indeed to praise him greatly. Confronted with an inrush of the most adventurous and irresponsible classes in the world, rough and ungovernable when they were not vicious, owning no law or authority save that of their own rude customs, and powerful enough to sweep all before them had they willed —the situation doubly embarrassed by the problem of the native races—Douglas was able of his own prestige and personality, without jot or

tittle of precedent whereon to base his action, to turn all to the upbuilding of the colony, establishing the law and sovereignty of Great Britain, firmly maintaining order, organizing the new community on terms that won the support and confidence, where they might have looked only for the enmity, of the wild and uncouth masses which made up the population, giving in short to the world at large the spectacle of a gold-field ruled as it was never ruled before, and laying the sure foundations of a greater community to be. This was the crowning achievement of Douglas carried out at no small sacrifice of his own ease and fortune; never may we cease to cherish the appreciation of it.

It is proper to add that no one was more conscious of his place in the political development of British Columbia than was Douglas himself. At sixty-one years old, in full possession of his powers, with an experience of the country greater than that of any other man, he chose to regard his public career as ended, rather than to launch upon that unknown sea on which the methods of all his past were to unlearn. For he was a product of the fur trade, first and always. He ruled the colony as he had ruled his company before. He could rule absolutely, but he could not govern. Thus let him stand, the greatest figure which the fur trade of Canada ever gave to the order which came after it.

It may be well to notice again, with this dominance of the Hudson's Bay Company over the mind

of Douglas in view, a basis of attack that was once of frequent use in the hands of his enemies. He has been many times condemned in that, while governor of Vancouver Island and still in the chief command of the company, he did not scruple to turn his dual office to the sole advantage of the commercial enterprise. But this is surely to misread the situation. As a matter of fact, Douglas in his capacity of governor and chief factor in one was almost wholly the chief factor. It could not have been otherwise. The British government was fully cognizant and expected, probably, no more than that the arrangement should secure, during an unsettled and indeterminate interval, the recognition of the imperial authority as supreme. This it did. Even the illegal assumption of the control of the Fraser in 1858 tended to the imperial advantage, though the more immediate object was the benefit of the company. The subservience of the government's interests was further emphasized by the agreement which threw the expenses of administration upon the company. Anomalous as were the relations thus created, they may not improbably have saved the colony from greater evils. In any case the charge of subordinating the interests of government to those of the company so many times preferred by contemporary and later critics must be laid at the door of the system rather than of Douglas. In the mainland colony no bitterness from this cause arose. Notorious as was the singleness of

purpose with which the Honourable Company of Adventurers trading into Hudson Bay pursued its ends, and with which (so powerful was the influence of that life of isolation and grinding discipline) it was able to inspire its servants from the governor down, no serious charge of favouritism was ever brought home to Douglas once his relations with the company were severed and he had pledged himself to the sole service of the Crown. If he never ceased to regard the company with that exaggerated reverence which seems the inevitable result of having once risen in its service, this is only to say that the force of nature was too strong for him and that he could not rise superior to so subtle and overwhelming an influence.

Upon the whole, however, if the testimony of his own age be sought, it is greatly in his favour. Of those whom he served, whether Crown or company, the approval was never-failing. He was indeed the most indefatigable, the most devoted, and the most efficient of executive officers. The confidence which the imperial government extended to him, in the almost absolute power which it placed in his hands, was of the highest of its kind. It is not essential that we should attempt to fuse the judgment of his other contemporaries. If he won favour from those he served, it was not at the expense of the mass of the people. Discontent among the miners was not always silent, nor did the attempt to levy tribute on their enterprise fail

to encounter fierce resistance; yet with the adoption of wiser counsels, as soon as he was free to do so, Douglas gained a unique place in the miner's heart for his even-handed justice and his strict protection of their interests. But greater far as an achievement was the hold which he secured and maintained upon the Indians. To the simple nature of the savage the gift of intuition has been added in unusual measure. No one more quickly recognizes weakness; no one is readier to acknowledge superiority. To win the Indian's confidence and obedience requires not only constant tact and care, it has need of a courage never known to waver and of a strict integrity of purpose as the guiding principle in every action. Especially was this the case with the native races of British Columbia, who if less warlike than their kindred of the plains, ranked higher in the moral qualities and were proverbial for their honesty, their hospitality and their chastity. Building upon the foundations which the Hudson's Bay Company had established in forty years of intercourse, Douglas attained much more than the usual influence of trader and friend. He became, as they called him, their father, to whom under the slow and crushing weight of the white invader they could look with the trustfulness of children to temper, if he could not turn aside, the bitterness of their fate. Thus by his personal authority he gained what under other circumstances might have cost the effusion of blood; and the

colony saw none of the outrages that for years held the western states in terror. Fear may at the first have formed a portion of the awe which he inspired; but in the end it was the justice and the kindliness of the governor that won their confidence. By nature crafty and suspicious, keen to resent intrusion, and reticent of their strongest feeling, they never for an instant questioned the perfect ascendency which he had gained over their minds, even while they saw their lands despoiled before their eyes or snatched from their possession. Decimated though they had been by the vices and diseases of civilization, they were still in 1858, when they passed beneath the British Crown, at least as strong in numbers as the invaders who dispossessed them. To the man who by the patient work of years could hold in leash this formidable element, exasperated by a treatment which had often added insult to injury, the debt of the young community is not easily to be estimated.

In person Sir James Douglas was not of the ordinary; the fact is of importance. It was a personal rule he bore. Six feet and more in height, but so well proportioned as not to seem beyond the usual stature, erect in carriage, muscular, measured and somewhat slow in his movements, yet natural and graceful withal, he was easily the most striking figure in the whole North-West. As he grew older, says Bancroft, the long face seemed to grow longer, the high forehead to grow

still more massive and the large and clear-cut features to assume still bolder proportions, while the firm and earnest purpose of the eyes and mouth deepened into a seriousness akin to melancholy. In a London thoroughfare as in a Canadian forest, in a parliament of the nations as in a hut of the fur traders, he would have fixed attention. Linked with those outer traits were a reserve and dignity, amounting often to hauteur, which a life-time of command had made a part of the man. But the cold and stern demeanour, the slow, even lethargic, manner, the formal and exaggerated courtesy, the serious, not to say solemn, cast of thought, the product of a widely informed though not original mind, expressed in a weighty, if not grandiose, habit of speech, were tempered by a deep religiousness that breathed through all his actions and made him to those who could pierce the inscrutable exterior a revelation of sympathy and kindness. To the people whom he ruled he was the personification of justice clothed with power. In that wild unsettled time, so swayed by the obvious and instinctive, it was a happy setting for the qualities demanded in a governor.

It has been the practice to compare him (not at all points to his advantage) with McLoughlin, the other leader which the fur trade bred on the Pacific slope; and the foil which the older man presents to the younger and, it may be said, the greater, has value of a striking kind in the at-

tempt to probe the inner recesses of the personality of Douglas. Fashioned by the same life and precepts, in the same iron mould of circumstance and environment, inseparably wedded to materialism, there was inevitably much of similarity in their character and in the manner in which they achieved their results. In bent of mind, in outward deportment, and in business methods, Douglas copied largely from his master. Each nature, however, had qualities which marked it sharply from the other. Temperamentally, McLoughlin was a Celt; Douglas was a Saxon. McLoughlin was quick, impulsive, intuitional; Douglas was methodical, conventional, exceedingly careful, and never to be hurried. Without the warmth, the artlessness, the spontaneity or the broad benevolence of McLoughlin, Douglas would win respect long before he touched the affections. It has been noted as a characteristic difference that McLoughlin could flatter, but that Douglas could not, though in diplomacy on a wider scale the latter was the superior. Magnanimous and forgetful of self, McLoughlin if he inspired fear and awe did so for his masters; when his company's interests clashed with his sense of humanity, it was the company and his own fortunes that had to suffer. Now Douglas would be a party to no disloyalty however virtuous; he never moved save toward success. That was his duty as he saw it, and to duty he could not be recreant. It is not that he ever failed

in justice, or in kindness where it was deserved; but even righteousness and humanity were made to yield their profit. When McLoughlin fell, there was no quixotic devotion to him on the part of Douglas; he stepped into his place. If you were asked why he should not, you would be puzzled for an answer. You will never find Douglas in the wrong; he was without the weaknesses of which unworthiness is bred. His was a greater intellect than McLoughlin's, and he achieved a greater destiny. Neither ever did an ignoble act. Side by side, as in life, their names shall go down unsullied in the annals of the great north-west.

It comes, therefore, in the end, as we search for the supreme virtue in the life and character of Douglas, to a recognition of his plain efficiency—that burning zeal, whatever the task in hand, to do it in the way that shall be best, with the sagacity to devise and the ability to carry out the measures adapted to this end. Being what he was, he would have risen to distinction, if not to greatness, anywhere. He had the key that opens every door, that of opportunity included. For how can opportunity be created by any man save by the preparedness and efficiency with which he faces the world?

"A work is wanted to be done, and lo, the man to do it!" Difficult and unexampled as was the task of giving earliest form to British Columbia, the country itself produced the man who carried

it to a successful issue. The genius of Douglas was of our own western soil; let us remember that with just pride. Let it be thought of happy augury to the great province of the Pacific that in the most dubious hour of her history she found within herself the leadership that brought her to safety and enabled her to face her destiny unafraid.

APPENDICES

APPENDICES

A

The name Nootka was evidently bestowed under a misapprehension. Two or three theories have been advanced to account for it, but perhaps the most reasonable is that of the Rev. A. J. Brabant, for many years an Oblate missionary at Hesquiot. The word "Nootka," he explained, is the frequentation of "nootk-sitl," to go around; make a circuit. "Nootka-a" would be a form of the imperative; "Nootka-minish," we have been around; "Nootka-atklnish," we are about to go around. Some form of the word "nootka" may be applied to the making of the circuit of the globe, or of an island, small or large, only the affix varies according to time, person, or place. It has been conjectured that Cook, after a reconnaissance of the sound, may have asked an Indian what the name of the place in his native tongue was. The Indian probably misunderstood him, but remembering that the white man had sailed around the small island, may possibly have used in reply some form of the derivative "notk," thus leaving the impression in Cook's mind that such was the name of the place.

B

Re Juan de Fuca and Captain Barkley. Mrs. Barkley, wife of Captain Barkley, who discovered or re-discovered the strait of Juan de Fuca, states in her diary that her husband named it after the old Greek pilot (whose real name was Apostolos Valerianos). He believed it to be the same that

the latter claimed to have entered and sailed far up in 1592. The story is found in *Hakluyt's Voyages*, and was well known to all the early navigators on the north-west Pacific coast. Barkley sound was named after Captain Barkley, but, until very recent years, was shown on all the maps as "Barclay Sound." Captain Barkley, who had volunteered for the third expedition of John Franklin, was a grandson of Captain Franklin, and settled on Vancouver island, where his descendants still live. Captain John Meares, whose exploits on the coast, particularly in connection with the Nootka Affair, were destined to make his name memorable, subsequently claimed the honour of discovering and naming the strait of Juan de Fuca, but known facts and his own reputation are sufficient to discredit his pretensions in this regard. Claims have been made on behalf of Captain Kendrick, the comrade of Gray, who first entered the mouth of the Columbia river, named after his ship, of discovering this strait, and it has been made the subject of much controversy. Dr. C. F. Newcombe, Victoria, a recognized authority on the north-west coast, and a scientist of very acute and accurate observation, wrote a monograph, entitled *The First Circumnavigation of Vancouver Island*, published under the auspices of the Archives of British Columbia, in which the matters in dispute have been put at rest in a very effective way. He has shown from maps and journals of navigators that the credit of discovering the strait of Juan de Fuca belongs wholly to Captain Barkley, and of being the first to circumnavigate Vancouver island to Captain Vancouver. The merits of the case as presented by him require too much space to be discussed here. In this connection, it may be stated that another important contribution by Dr. Newcombe to our knowledge of coast navigation is *Menzies Journal Vancouver's Voyage, April to October 1792* (1923), published under the same auspices.

C

The statement that: "This (the indemnity of $210,000) was handed over to the owners of the property seized, and Nootka and the adjoining territory was restored to the British Crown," is somewhat too vague, so much so as perhaps to be misleading. By the terms it was agreed that the buildings and tracts of land on the north-west coast *of which the subjects of Great Britain had been dispossessed* should be restored; that a just reparation should be made for every act of violence or hostility on the subjects of either nation; and, as the most important of the provisions, that "it is agreed that their respective subjects shall not be disturbed or molested either in navigation or carrying on their fisheries in the Pacific or in the South Seas, or in landing on the coasts of these seas, in places not already occupied, for the purpose of carrying on their commerce with the natives of the country *or of making establishments there.*" This did not quite end the Nootka Affair. It took a long arbitration and two more conventions to determine the amount of indemnification and the territory to be included in the restoration. The latter could not have been more than Captain Meares claimed he had purchased from the Indian chief Maquinna for a pair of horse-pistols, and the limits were most indefinite and certainly could not have been extensive, although Captain Vancouver had claimed it included the whole of the territory surrounding Nootka and Clayoquot. To whatever limited extent was decided upon, it could have no effect on the general sovereignty of the coast north and south, which unfortunately was left indeterminate. Charles Fox at the time denounced the treaty because it left nothing settled, and the door wide open for future disputes when the time came sooner or later to definitely fix a boundary. As pointed out in the main part of the volume, Great Britain was beset with so

many difficulties of so grave a nature nearer home that she was glad to shelve the issues that should have been involved until a more convenient season.

D

The Hudson's Bay Company's agricultural and associated industries were the inspiration and, so to speak, the personal creation of Dr. John McLoughlin. His proposals had never had the warm support of Sir George Simpson, and he had great difficulty in persuading the London directorate to permit him to undertake his ambitious enterprises. For some time a resident of Old Oregon he realized the agricultural value and possibilities of the rich valleys encompassed in what are now the states of Washington and Oregon, whose great wealth have long since been demonstrated. Minerals at that time were not of any concern, because their existence was unknown, but the agricultural areas and the vast forests extending along the coast region for hundreds of miles and the waters everywhere teeming with such a prodigious abundance of fish life, unparalleled, in respect of salmon at least, elsewhere in the world, appealed to McLoughlin's far-seeing and practical mind as possessing potentialities far beyond anything which lay in the fur trade. He visualized, even then, a future great market in the countries in and bordering upon the Pacific. The Hudson's Bay Company, which had not favoured or encouraged Lord Selkirk's efforts at agricultural settlement in Rupert's Land, believed, as a general policy, only in fur-farming, which its people thoroughly understood. The local autocrat of the company, Sir George Simpson, also a man of vision in his own way, scented the danger of agricultural development in Oregon, as in its success inviting the settler whose interests were regarded as ruinous to the future of the fur trade. And he was wholly right in his surmises.

When the first missionaries from the Eastern States came to Oregon to spread the Gospel among the Indians, they noted, with an eye not single to the glory of God, the large cultivated farms, highly productive orchards, live stock on an extensive scale, and saw and grist mills. They, as a consequence, spread a different gospel in the East, and crusaded for settlers. They cried out to their countrymen everywhere: "Come in and possess [for Uncle Sam] this land flowing with milk and honey." In this way they settled the Oregon boundary question. Dr. McLoughlin made a success of his undertaking, personally directing every branch of the business, and found a market for the surplus products in Russia and the Sandwich Islands. He had no greater desire than his superiors for settlers from the United States, but when they came in instalments, ever increasing, year after year, broken in health, impoverished as to clothing and food, and the prospective prey of the Indians, like the large-hearted Christian he was, he took them in, sheltered them, fed and clothed them, and sold them seed and supplies to go on with. Because of this he earned the gratitude of the succoured ones in a degree which was in inverse ratio to the disfavour in which he found himself at headquarters. Farming and other operations were financially successful, but it was not part of the policy of the company that these things should be regarded as part of their regular and recognized business, and the Puget Sound Agricultural Company was formed as a subsidiary. Nor was it the intention or purpose that the new corporation should earn dividends. That would have advertised agricultural possibilities. The point is, however, that whatever credit is due for this pioneer agricultural industry of the whole Pacific coast belongs to the man who previsioned and promoted it. In this connection, one cannot but conclude that if the Hudson's Bay Company had concentrated some of its energies in Great Britain in order to secure

settlers there for Old Oregon, of which British Columbia was then in its largest extent, a part, and brought them in its own ships around Cape Horn, planted them in good locations, assisted and protected them, history as it should have been written would have redounded to its lasting glory, and they would have retained for the Empire and Canada an extent of territory on the Pacific coast large enough to be an empire in itself.

E

While Sir James Douglas may in a sense be regarded as "the first representative of the Crown in a British colony on the Pacific coast," in strict reality he was not. As has already been recorded, with all the circumstances attending the fact, he succeeded Richard Blanshard as governor of Vancouver Island, and was thus the second representative of the Crown.

F

At the time the first edition of this volume was written the first three lines of page 80 were true; namely, "there are volumes of unwritten history in the archives of the company, which have never become accessible to the student." The author, though armed with a letter from Lord Strathcona, the then governor, in the office of the company at No. 1 Lime Street, London, was denied access to the records, even though the object was to obtain a few facts exclusively relating to Sir James, not otherwise obtainable. After an hour's pleading, the only concession made was that if a memorandum of the information desired were furnished, it would be supplied later on. After a considerable time had elapsed the information vouchsafed was contained on a small sheet of note paper, and in one or two particulars

was incorrect. This happily has all been changed and the archives are now open to the inquiring student of affairs so far as they relate to the past history of the company; and in addition to that, a gentleman of distinction in letters, has been appointed (1926) to write an official history of the company.

G

Sir James Douglas in his journals had a useful habit of making discursive comments upon subjects not immediately related to the matter in hand, such as a journey to York Factory or a trip to the north-west coast. For instance, in the "Journal of a Trading Expedition," April 1840 to 1841, we find the following:

Governor Simpson on his return from the interior saw Mr. Moffat at Lachine, who, in conversation, stated his intention of moving the question of abolishing the fur trade monopoly and throwing the Indian fur trade open to competition, in the provincial legislature. He expressed his determination to push the matter from motives of duty.

On the governor's arrival in England he represented to Mr. Pelly and Mr. Colville the necessity of taking immediate steps to have the licence of trade renewed, before the Canadian legislature could bring forward any measure to oppose these views, as their wishes would have great weight with the Home government. These gentlemen adopted his views, and it was proposed that an immediate application should be made to the government on the subject, while the matter should be kept a profound secret from everyone connected with the company.

Accordingly, Sir George Simpson drew up a report on the country, exhibiting its present state, the tranquillity which everywhere existed among the natives, the disuse of spirituous liquors, the establishment of thirteen schools, the employment of clergy, and the erection of churches in Red River, the means of moral improvement generally in operation and in progress, and the happiness that was everywhere felt, contrasted with the train of evils, such as drunkenness,

murders, and general demoralization, which had formerly existed, and would certainly . . . destroy this present happy state of things.

This report was addressed to the company, and Sir John Pelly wrote to Lord Glenelg, the colonial secretary, on the subject of the licence, referring His Lordship to the report of Sir George Simpson for information. Lord Glenelg, a pious, good man, approved highly of the report, and said he had derived from it much interesting information entirely new, and of a description which could nowhere else be obtained. He advocated the company's views with the Treasury Board, before whom the case was next carried, and passed with their approval to the Lords Commissioners of the. . . .

Mr. Milne, their secretary, a person of high moral character, advocate of benevolent institutions, and the working man of the Board, took a great interest in the matter, and strongly advocated the renewal of the licence trade. Mr. Paulitt [Poulett] Thompson proposed that it should be renewed at an annual rent of £20,000. Sir George Pelly refused to give a farthing. Ten thousand pounds was then asked and also refused, and Sir George threatened to throw the whole thing on their hands when they would have to maintain a solicitor-general, courts of law, a military force to keep Indians and others in check, and import provisions at a heavy expense to the government, for their maintenance.

He also produced a calculation showing that when the first licence was granted the proprietors of stock were penniless [?], that they had to work up hill for a long time amidst great loss, and taking the increasing heavy losses into account the business had not paid more than two or three per cent up to that time.

Mr. Milne saw and argued that as a matter of simple justice it would be unfair to take the trade out of the company's hands without a further enjoyment of its prosperous [?] state, and the licence was at length renewed after several months' discussion, and being bandied about from one department to another.

The question was often laid aside, but Sir John Pelly was incessant in his application and attendance, so that he allowed them no repose.

Mr. Spring Rice was very useful in this negotiation. He

was then in treaty with Sir John Pelly, a director of the Bank of England, for certain favours the government required from the bank, and Sir John took advantage of his position to push the Hudson's Bay Company's claims, and finally succeeded.

Whilst the question of a renewal of the licence was in agitation Sir George Simpson was managing to win over the winterers to a renewal of the agreement. Edward Smith was then in England, and he was the first who signed it. The other winterers signed it one after another, and when Sir George Simpson arrived at Norway House he had procured a majority.

Many of the winterers were using threats to have their own way at the close of the present concern [?] and talked of appointing delegates to settle matters with the company.

Sir George says that had Moffatt been refused, as would have been the case, he would have encouraged them to hold out, and formed a trader's company in Canada.

Sir George was proposing for the new concern that there should be three classes of partners, say: Councillors, holding one share—the number of each to be 10, 20, 30.

He also observed to the company that they should hold the same right enjoyed by the winterers, of dissolving partnership at pleasure, as the company would not be likely to abuse the power which may never be enforced.

The above as written by Sir James Douglas, a servant of the company, well-informed on such matters, is most interesting and illuminating as illustrating methods used by the higher officials of the Hudson's Bay Company in England in political proposals affecting its own affairs.

In the same journal, Sir James gives us an informative discourse about the Indians, in which he says:

The Indians of the north-west coast believe in the existence of a Supreme Being whose name is "Yealth," and that he has a son named "Yealth Yay," that is, the "Son of God." They also believe there is a malevolent Being called "Coostahooshteeacah." Yealth wears the human form, he made the earth; then man was formed. A faint light afterwards appeared gradually growing in brightness

until the stars were seen. Then the moon was made; and lastly, the sun shone forth in all its glory. They think that all men are not descended from the same parent stock, but that Yealth travelled from country to country and made a new man in each to whom he gave a different language, not through the exertion of miraculous power, but by the mere physical process of the position of the internal organs, by giving them a good sound twist with his hand.

When all things were finished he commanded them to do good, and to commit no wickedness; while at the same time he urged them to retaliate the hostile attacks of other nations, and return injury for injury. He added: "I am now going away, but my eye will always be with you. If you live wicked lives, you cannot come to me, as the good only can live in my place." With these words he left the earth and has not since returned to it, and they do not know where he is at present.

They also think there is a future state of retributive rewards and punishments. After death the souls of men ascend through a succession of stages, rising one over another, like the stories of a house, to the highest heaven, where they find a strong gate, guarded by a gigantic porter who knows the name of every spirit that appears there. After proclaiming aloud that such a one is at the gate claiming admittance, he proceeds to question the spirit regarding his past life, and closes the examination either by receiving it into heaven, or driving it away to the interior stages where he wanders about comfortlessly, amidst yawning gulfs opening every moment before its steps; or is carried into the place of torment where it is exposed to ceaseless agony from devouring fire, where it exists for ever in misery.

The knowledge of these things has no perceptible effect on their conduct. They steal, and cheat, and lie whenever they feel an interest in doing so, without any visible apprehension of exciting Yealth's displeasure. They, however, all admit that theft, falsehood and roguery are criminal, but nevertheless have recourse to them without hesitation, whenever it suits their purpose.

Polygamy is a general practice among them, and they keenly resent any unsanctioned conduct in their wives, although they do not scruple to sell their favours for a small

consideration. If unmarried women prove frail through love to faithless swains, the latter, if their guilt be discovered, are bound to make reparations to the parents; and to salve their wounded honour by a handsome present; or the friends of the offending fair one may proceed to exact ample justice or revenge for the insult. It must not, however, be supposed that they would be induced to act this part from any sense of reflected shame, or from a desire of discouraging vice by making an example of the vicious; or that the young lady has any compunctious visitings of remorse, or that her parents think her a bit the worse for the accident; or her character is in any way blemished. Such are not the feelings, for the offender is regarded simply as a robber who has committed depredations on their goods, and their only anxiety is to make the awarded damages as heavy as possible.

Throughout the journals of his various expeditions, Douglas made numerous observations as to natural history, trade on the Pacific, habits and customs of the natives and gave a great deal of incidental information in respect of tribal divisions, language, meaning of words was also included, all of which if germane to the subject of this volume would be of great interest.

H

Daniel William Harmon, a pious but shrewd Connecticut Yankee, who was for ten years—1810 to 1820—in New Caledonia in charge of affairs there for the North West Company, was a rather remarkable man, one of the few of the fur traders who carried his religion openly into the wilderness and daily practised what he preached. Judging from contemporary estimates of him, he was a blunt, hard-living man—a creature of the circumstances which surrounded him, wedded to duty, hardship and danger. A modern Pepys, he set down each day a record of events and his impressions, and from his journal, published after

he left New Caledonia, are gleaned about all the knowledge we have of conditions in that country during his stay there, the story of the establishment of the North West Company there, and the nature and extent of its operations. It is full of pious reflections, and from it also is learned that he set apart the first day of each month for prayer and meditation.

It is, however, particularly worth recording that he was the first farmer in the territory west of the Rockies, as well as the first historian of the northern interior. His journal records his planting potatoes and sowing barley, turnips, etc., on Stuart Lake on May 22nd, 1811; also of his having planted potatoes, and sowed corn and onion, carrot, beet and parsnip seed at Fraser Lake on May 10th, 1815. In October, 1816, we are told that he had taken up his vegetables, and that from one bushel of potatoes he dug forty-one, and that all the other vegetables did well. In 1818 five quarts of barley yielded as many bushels, which in the same proportion would have given eighty-four bushels to the acre.

From an entry at Fort Fraser, where he spent the New Year of 1811, we get some sidelights on the social conventions of the day. On special occasions, such as after a long and hard journey, or upon recognized holidays, the servants of the company were treated to what was commonly called a *régale*, which was neither more nor less than plentiful "jorums" of spirits, usually in the form of rum. But New Year's Day was the day of all days. Drinking and dancing, and it must be added fighting—for such gatherings usually ended in a *melée*—were the favourite amusements of the light-hearted *engagé*, who for the time being threw care to the winds and drowned the memory of hardships in heroic libations. Such orgies, however, were general throughout the fur-trading territory and were taken as a matter of course and custom.

APPENDICES

I

Sir James Douglas, prior to his succession to the chiefdom of the Western Department of the Hudson's Bay Company after the signing of the Oregon Treaty, was in charge of several very important expeditions, including two that were highly diplomatic, showing to what extent he was in the confidence of his superiors and to what extent they respected his judgment. While in New Caledonia he made a number of trips of reconnaissance, but these were minor in the nature of the business he had in hand as compared with missions he accomplished while at Fort Vancouver, and were not out of the ordinary in the experience of Hudson's Bay Company officials, though infrequent in the case of one then so young as he.

In 1835, he left Fort Vancouver on March 3rd, with three boats and twenty-nine Canadians and Iroquois for York Factory, a distance by the circuitous route followed of not less than 5,000 miles. Some of the passengers were destined for Fort Colville, for work there, and some were retired servants bound for their Canadian homes. He ascended the Columbia river, past the mouth of "Lewis and Clarke's river," and from there proceeded directly across the country, encamping at Spokane and Colville. By canoe and horses the party made rapid progress. On April 27th they reached Assiniboine and on the 30th, Edmonton. They made Fort Pitt on May 7th, Fort Carlton on the 10th, Fort Pelly on the 18th, and Fort Garry on May 30th. Travelling from Fort Garry by the usual route, they came to their destination on June 24th. On July 16th, Douglas and party started on their return trip to Fort Vancouver, and on the 29th of October were within a few days' journey from home. Here the journal ceased. This long journey and return by canoe and horses was performed in about eight months, including the three weeks' stay at York

Factory. Not a moment of time was lost and the various stops, going and coming, were made on schedule time, except where adverse winds delayed, and then every effort was made to catch up with the time-table. In the journal of Douglas elaborate descriptions are given of the diversified scenery, the nature of the country, and its inhabitants, through which he passed.

In 1840-41, Douglas made two important journeys, one to the north-west coast, in respect of trade and also of negotiations with the Russian fur-traders, and the other to California, where he had to deal with Spanish officials. While north he established a fort at Taku, formerly spelled in a variety of ways, and also fixed with the Russian authorities the limits of trading and the conditions under which trading was carried on by the respective trading companies. In his journal there are as usual observations on a variety of things which came under his observation. He particularly deplores the system of slavery, in which traffic in slaves captured in warfare was carried on in much the same fashion as in, and preferably to, furs. As late as that date (1840) Douglas, in his report to Dr. McLoughlin, records that the Chilcats and other coast Indians still went beyond the headquarters of the inlets to stated meeting-places to purchase furs from the natives of the interior, who were never seen on the coast, which confirms previous statements used in discussing the genesis of the Russian-British treaty of 1825, fixing the boundaries of what is now Alaska. One of these references is as follows:

Distant excursions into the interior are made every summer by the Chilcat people for the purpose of trade. In the pursuit of this object, they follow the course of the Chilcat river for a time, leave their canoes when it ceases to become navigable and perform the remainder of their journey on foot, attended by a crowd of slaves, who carry their provisions and packs of goods.

In six days they traverse the mountainous region

which bounds the coast, and enter a level thinly wooded country inhabited by the people with whom they traffic. From the direction of their route and the distance travelled, this section of the country must lie between the maritime chain of mountains on this coast, and the range which borders the western bank of McKenzie's river beyond the 60th parallel of north latitude. I could not discover if the people who live there have any intercourse with our forts on the McKenzie, but as the existence of these [the forts] seem unknown to the Chilcat traders if is probable they are not within the circle of our acquaintance.

J

The epidemic was probably the most serious that ever visited the Pacific coast. Mrs. Eva Emery Dye in her *McLoughlin and Old Oregon* gives a great many graphic details. By some it was supposed that the germs were carried thither by a Boston ship that came into the Columbia river for salmon, and by others that the "vials of pestilence had been uncorked" by the first ploughing at Fort Vancouver. Whatever the origin, the ravages were frightful. From 1829 to 1832 thirty thousand Indians perished in the valleys of the Columbia and Willamette. Several large tribes of Indians were wiped out completely. At one village of natives, six miles below Fort Vancouver, Mrs. Dye relates, "the bones lay five feet high and ten rods long for years, where the dead were piled in a ghastly open tomb." On Wapato island, the seat of the great chief Maniquon's people, only one slave boy remained, and the atmosphere was laden with the fetid odours of the dead. Chief-Trader Ogden constructed a funeral pyre, and the remains of a warrior race were consumed. The old chief referred to became possessed with the idea that not "the Great Spirit" did it, but the Hudson's Bay Company, who poisoned the people in order to get the beautiful island for a dairy farm. Many of the whites were taken sick as well,

including Dr. McLoughlin, but the fatalities were few, if any, among them. Subsequently there were scourges of smallpox, which wrought havoc with the natives from the mouth of the Columbia river to and into Alaska.

K

In connection with the fixing of the Oregon boundary line, Great Britain has been blamed for supineness, which is far from being true, and lack of knowledge of the territory. Through the Hudson's Bay Company, the government of Great Britain was far better informed about the Oregon territory than were the Americans. Daniel Webster, when importuned by Dr. Whitman and others as to taking action in respect of it, considered it was not worth the shedding of a drop of blood for, and had it not been for Senator Benton and other western representatives, briefed by the missionaries and settlers in Oregon, it is doubtful if any enthusiasm could have been raised on account of it in the United States. Greenhow, librarian of the Congressional library, in his *History of Oregon and California*, wrote in 1844:

Oregon, indeed, contains lands in small detached portions which may afford to the industrious cultivator the means of subsistence, and also, perhaps, in time, of foreign luxuries; but it produces no precious metals, no opium, no cotton, no rice, no sugar, no coffee; nor is it, like India, inhabited by a numerous population, who may easily be forced to labour for the benefit of the few. With regard to commerce, it offers no great advantages, present or immediately prospective. It contains no harbour in which articles of merchandise from other countries will probably at any future period be deposited for re-exportation; while the extreme irregularity of its surface, and the obstruction to the navigation of its rivers, the removal of which is hopeless, forbid all expectation that the productions of China, or any other country bordering on the Pacific coast will ever be transported across Oregon to the Atlantic regions of the continent.

No British statesman or diplomat could possibly have uttered a more pessimistic opinion about the country than that. The United States was simply standing on its sentimental desire to win out, just as two neighbours might have resort to costly litigations as to whether an inch of property in dispute on their fence-line belonged to one or the other, irrespective of the value of the property involved. In seventy years, and in reality in much less time than that, this more or less true condition of affairs at that time has been changed to an actuality represented in the following facts. Including California and British Columbia, which latter was then part of Oregon, the tonnage of shipping entering or clearing in Pacific coast ports amounted to about 19,000,000 tons in 1924. The Pacific slope produced about $250,000,000 in value in minerals. Its total trade in the same year was $1,132,000,000. In round figures, 2,700,000 tons of shipping passed through the Panama canal. A great many steamship lines on the Pacific carry goods from the Orient and Australasia to and through America to Europe and back from these continents to Asia. In all, there are eight lines of railway, either transcontinental, or having transcontinental connections, with termini on Pacific ports. All of which illustrated the folly of prophecying too far ahead.

In this connection, the statement that "the United States claimed the entire coast from California to Alaska as of right, but were at all times willing to agree that the boundary should follow the 49th parallel to the Pacific" is subject to considerable qualification. Before feeling in the United States had been aroused by demagogic appeals to the electorate and "fifty-four forty or fight" became a slogan in Polk's presidential campaign that was true. The offer to accept the 49th parallel was withdrawn and Polk insisted on the extreme limit of claims of the United States—that or nothing. The elections over and Polk elected, feelings

calmed down. Great Britain, however, which had never yielded on the merits of her contention, felt that to have continued to insist on what she considered her rights meant creating a serious situation, possibly another war, and accepted the 49th parallel as a compromise. Of course, it would have been Britain's war, not Canada's, although Canada would have been a pawn in the game.

It is interesting to note that Governor Pelly, of the Hudson's Bay Company, in a letter to Mr. Canning, foreign secretary, in December, 1825, wrote as follows:

But as I have already stated, it does not appear that the Americans can establish a just claim to any part of the country either to the south or north of the Columbia river, and, as the free navigation of that river is necessary to our carrying on the trade, I have endeavoured to fix on a boundary which would answer the views of the Hudson's Bay Company without pushing the claims of Great Britain to their fullest extent.

I have, therefore, to suggest, that starting from latitude 49° at the Rocky Mountains the line ought to be continued southward along the height of land to the place where Lewis and Clarke crossed the mountains, said to be in latitude 46° 42′, thence westerly along the Lewis's river until it falls into the Columbia and thence to the sea, leaving the navigation of both these rivers free to the subjects of both nations. This line would leave to America the trade and possessions of an extensive and valuable country and would furnish fewer opportunities of collision between the traders of the two nations, than any other line that could be suggested.

That practically was accepted as the basis of the British claim and remained so until a compromise was effected. The origin of the term "fifty-four forty or fight" is obscure, but it arose out of a long piece of doggerel written by an erratic, but highly-gifted financial genius, who was at one time prominently associated with the promotion of the Northern Pacific. One stanza of it ran like this:

APPENDICES

British Columbia's waters teem
With salmon, halibut, and cod,
Fifty-four-forty or fight by God.

L

A good deal of discussion has arisen about the origin of the name "Camosun," by which the fort of Victoria was first known. Douglas in his report to Dr. McLoughlin, after making a reconnaissance of the southern end of Vancouver Island for the purpose of selecting a site for new headquarters, in 1842, calls it "Camosack," and, incidentally, speaks of the present Esquimalt as "Is-whoy-malth." One authority on Indian names suggested that it came from "kamass" or "camass," a plant at that time very plentiful in the vicinity of Victoria and largely used as food by the Indians. The affix "on" or "an" meaning "the place of." The late Dr. C. F. Newcombe, whose pronouncement on matters of that nature locally is worthy of consideration, was not favourable to that origin. On the other hand, James R. Anderson, late deputy minister of agriculture in British Columbia, who lived in the fort as a boy, and whose father, Alexander Caulfield Anderson, was a prominent official of the Hudson's Bay Company, and somewhat erudite, contends that Fort Victoria was never at any time officially known as either Camosun or Albert, but always as Fort Victoria.

M

In the commission appointing Richard Blanshard governor of Vancouver Island the terms were very explicit as to the appointment of a legislative council and the calling together of a legislative assembly. The governor did not at first deem it expedient to carry out either of these instructions, for reasons which he explained in a despatch to Earl

Grey, secretary of state for the colonies. There was not sufficient population to start with, to justify it, and in the second place any one appointed or elected to either body would necessarily be an officer of the Hudson's Bay Company, or dependent upon it, and so would be completely under the control of the superior officers of the company. However, little heed was paid to his representations. Three white men had been murdered at Fort Rupert, where the Hudson's Bay Company coal-mining operations were being carried on, and Governor Blanshard, with the aid of a British warship, had taken prompt, though unsuccessful, action to punish the Indians and suppress the trouble. In reporting the affair to Earl Grey, he also pointed out the desirability of a small military force being sent out, in view of the threatening attitude of the northern tribes. In reply he was told that Her Majesty's government could not undertake to maintain a detachment of troops on the island. Blanshard was even sharply rebuked for taking the steps he had to punish the Indians, the rather extraordinary proposition being laid down:

> That Her Majesty's government cannot undertake to protect, or attempt to punish injuries committed upon British subjects, who voluntarily expose themselves to the violence or treachery of the native tribes at a distance from the settlements.

Blanshard was urged without delay to appoint his council. Earl Grey evidently could not appreciate the unfortunate position of the governor, who was now between the upper and nether millstones of a government in England, and a rather unsympathetic and intractable corporation with which he was closely in contact on the scene of action. The Home office displayed neither cordiality nor sympathy with him in his endeavours to do what he thought was right. It may be that Earl Grey got tired of Blanshard's rather lugubrious despatches—Blanshard had little else to do than write

communications—or perhaps he repented that he had not acted upon Sir John Pelly's advice, and promptly appointed Douglas governor. At all events, when Blanshard resigned, the only self-respecting thing he could do, his resignation was accepted with alacrity and without a word of appreciation of his services. As soon as the settlers learned of the resignation, fourteen of them, along with the Rev. Robert John Staines, the company's chaplain, signed a memorial setting forth their grievances and their fears for the colony if it should be left to the tender mercies of the Hudson's Bay Company. After expressing regrets on account of the proposed departure of Mr. Blanshard, and surprise at the proposed appointment, as his successor, of a high official of the company, it went on to set forth:

The Hudson's Bay Company being as it is, a great trading body, must necessarily have interests clashing with those of independent colonists. Most matters of a political nature will cause a contest between the agents of the company and the colonists. Most matters of a judicial nature also, will undoubtedly arise, in which the colonists and the company (or its servants) will be contending parties, or the upper servants and the lower servants of the company will be arrayed against each other. We beg to express in the most emphatic and plainest manner our assurance that impartial decisions cannot be expected from a governor, who is not only a member of the company, sharing its profits, his share of such profits rising and falling as they rise and fall, but is also charged as their chief agent with the sole representation of their trading interest in this island and the adjacent coast. Furthermore, thus situated, the colony will have no security that its public funds will be duly disposed of for the benefit of the colony in general, and not turned aside in any degree to be applied to the private business of the company, by disproportionate sums being devoted to the improvement of that tract of land held by them or otherwise unduly employed.

Under these circumstances we beg to acquaint Your Excellency with the deep sense of the absolute necessity

there is, for the real good and welfare of the country, that a council should be immediately appointed, in order to provide some security that the interests of the Hudson's Bay Company shall not be allowed to outweigh and ruin those of the colony in general.

We, who join in expressing these sentiments to Your Excellency, are unfortunately but a very small number, but we respectfully beg Your Excellency to consider that we, and we alone, represent the interests of the island as a free and independent British colony, for we constitute the whole body of the independent settlers, all the other inhabitants being in some way or other so connected with and controlled by the Hudson's Bay Company as to be deprived of freedom of action in all matters relating to the public affairs of the colony. . . . And we further allege our firm persuasion, that the untoward influences to which we have averted above are likely, if entirely unguarded against, not only to prevent any increase of free and independent colonists in the island. but positively to diminish their present numbers.

The above memorial states so succinctly the position of the colonists and sets forth so plainly their idea of the Hudson's Bay Company, in its capacity as a nation-builder and at the same time a great business corporation with a monopoly of trade, that the historian of the period cannot afford to overlook it, holding as it does such an important place in the few early state papers of Vancouver Island. The first settlers were dependent upon the company for everything that they required—not only for supplies—but for markets and transportation facilities. With the exception of an occasional whaler, or American trader, no ships visited Vancouver Island, except those belonging to the company, and those at infrequent intervals; hence, the company effectively controlled the avenues of trade beyond the bounds of the colony. The company had a large trade with the Russian settlement at Sitka, and to that port it shipped the surplus products of the farms, a trade that was not open to the colonists. Again the company was the

only purchaser on the island, and its store at Fort Victoria was the only market where supplies might be bought or produce sold. The officer in charge of the fort, therefore, regulated the price paid for such things as the settlers might wish to sell. The settlers were borne on the books of the company as strangers, and, therefore, were obliged to pay for their supplies such amounts as the officer demanded. In view of such circumstances, it is not surprising that the few settlers there were, realized their helplessness and were fearful of the future. Coming to the country with high expectations, they were naturally dissatisfied with the company, which was the rock to which, like Prometheus, they were bound, and the company's servants were perpetually quarrelling among themselves over petty matters in a small community. Governor Blanshard's official duties consisted almost wholly in keeping peace amongst them. As a matter of fact, their fears, apart from an inevitable situation already indicated, were largely unfounded. Governor Douglas did not prove to be an ogre. He was essentially honest and highminded. He acted strictly within his instructions as conveyed to him from his two superiors in Downing and Lime Streets, London, but these did not conflict in any material sense with the interests of the settlers, There was little or no opportunity for settlement to expand or the settlers to prosper, even if there had been no Hudson's Bay Company. Really, there would have been much less opportunity, as much subsequent experience has shown. However, Governor Blanshard, before his departure, more in compliance with the wishes of the settlers than with his official instructions, did appoint a legislative council, which consisted of: James Douglas, head of the Hudson's Bay Company in the Western Department, John Tod, and James Cooper, about whom further particulars follow.

Between the original appointments and the year 1866, the date of the union of the colonies of Vancouver Island

and British Columbia, eight councillors in all were named, as follows: The Hon. James Douglas, 1851, appointed the same year as governor; the Hon. John Tod, August, 1851, and the Hon. James Cooper, August, 1851, both of whom later resigned; the Hon. Roderick Finlayson, November, 1851, succeeding Douglas; the Hon. John Work, April, 1853, who died 21st December, 1862; the Hon. Donald Fraser, November, 1858; the Hon. David Cameron, July, 1859; and the Hon. Alfred J. Langley, February, 1861.

The Hon. John Tod was one of the most remarkable of the old time fur traders, eccentric, disputatious on many matters in epistolary correspondence, but withal resourceful and highly courageous. Many anecdotes, some of which appear in Bancroft's history of British Columbia, are told of him. He was born in Scotland about 1791 or 1792, entering the service of the Hudson's Bay Company as quite a young man and embarking for York Factory. Although there is no record of his having joined the North West Company later, he was in Astoria in 1814, and saw service at several of the posts, west of the Rocky Mountains, on the Columbia and in British Columbia. Tod reached the rank of chief factor and retired to a residence at Cadboro' Bay, Victoria. He was reappointed to the Legislative Council in 1856, and died August 31st, 1882.

The Hon. James Cooper was a seafaring man, of whom otherwise little is known. He was appointed to one of the Hudson's Bay Company vessels in 1844, and was promoted to the command of the ship in 1846, and remained with the company until 1850, when he came to Victoria as supercargo with the intention of becoming a settler on Vancouver Island, after which his relations with that corporation were not so pleasant. He attempted to carry on a trade with the natives on his own account, but the experiment failed as the result of competition on the part of the company. Captain Cooper was one of the witnesses, along with ex-

Governor Blanshard, who gave evidence to the committee of the House of Commons in 1847, whose report ended Hudson's Bay sovereignty on Vancouver Island. He championed the rights of the independent settlers.

The Hon. Robert Finlayson is best known as one of the founders of Fort Victoria, in 1843, and superintended its construction. He was born in Rosshire, Scotland, in 1818, and entered the service of the Hudson's Bay Company, in which relatives of his had already risen to distinction. In 1839, in his seventeenth year, he crossed the continent to Fort Vancouver. Interesting incidents of his career are given in the history of McLoughlin written by Mrs. Eva Emery Dye, Oregon City. Subsequently, he spent a period of his life on the north-west coast, at Taku Inlet, where he built Fort Durham, named after the earl famous in Canadian history as governor and author of the Durham report on Canadian affairs. Later, he was stationed on the Stikine and at Fort Simpson. Finlayson was chief factor and succeeded Charles Ross as commander of the fort in Victoria. His diary, printed for private circulation, is invaluable in connection with the history of Fort Victoria and events associated with it.

Coming to the Hon. John Work, we have a figure whose descendants are the most numerous and best known among those of Hudson's Bay Company stock in Victoria—Works, Tolmies, Finlaysons, Grahames and Priors. Dr. Simon F. Tolmie, late minister of agriculture, is a grandson. The late Col. the Hon. E. G. Prior, premier and lieutenant-governor of British Columbia, was married to a daughter, and James Grahame, a commissioner of the company, to another. The late Hon. James Work, centenarian senator, was a brother. John Work was one of the comparatively few of the Hudson's Bay Company officials to be born in England. In 1814 he entered its service, and served his apprenticeship in the eastern districts until 1822, after which

he followed the long trail to the Columbia river, and for a time was in charge of Fort Colville, and of the first farm said to have been cultivated west of the Rockies. He commanded large trapping parties on the great plains, wandered in the swamps of California in quest of beaver, and in 1849 was one of the company's managers in the Western Department, at which time he settled in Victoria, where he died in 1862.

The Hon. David Cameron, who became chief-justice of Vancouver Island and remained as such until 1865, was not legally trained, but on the contrary was a linen draper. He was, however, the brother-in-law of Governor Douglas, whose sister he had met and married in Demerara, where he was a merchant. Going to Vancouver Island in 1854, after being appointed to the council, he was made judge of the Supreme Court of Civil Justice, a high sounding title, considering the inconsiderable number and the comparatively trivial nature of the cases which came before him. Later he was promoted to chief-justice. He died May 14th, 1872, and the *Colonist* said of him that although he was not a lawyer, his "legal knowledge was extensive," sufficient, at all events, for the purpose at the time, and to the satisfaction of the community. He was bitterly attacked by E. E. Langford, of the Puget Sound Agricultural Company, a disaffected settler, who impugned his legal status, his character as a judge, and as a creature of his brother-in-law, but he was sustained by the secretary of state for the colonies as the result of a strong petition in his favour by officials of the company.

The Hon. Alfred John Langley, born in Lichfield, Staffordshire, October, 1820, emigrated to Nova Scotia, and later joined the rush to California in 1849. Mr. Langley was a druggist, and in San Francisco founded the firm of Langley, Michaels & Company, but in 1858 was caught by the mining excitement in British Columbia. In Victoria, he established

the firm of Langley & Company. His interest in public affairs was recognized by Governor Douglas, who appointed him to the council in 1861. He was further honoured by being appointed commissioner to the London Exhibition of 1862. It is stated that for his services in this capacity he was offered knighthood, but declined. He died, April 9th, 1896.

The Hon. Donald Fraser was in British Columbia during the days of the early gold-mining excitement—the representative of a London paper—and as a consequence took a warm interest in the affairs of the two Pacific colonies. In later years, when the late Gilbert Malcolm Sproat was agent-general of British Columbia in England the latter was ably supported by Fraser in the advancement of the province by publicity and in every other way possible.

The minutes of the legislative council meetings, few and far between, sometimes abortive for lack of a quorum, from 1851 to 1861—103 in eleven years—were kept in writing, and were not printed and did not become available for general perusal until the year 1918. As records of actual legislative work they are much more important than those of the legislative assembly, the limits of whose real authority was extremely restricted. From the pages of these old minutes, in an official way at least, we get the sole record of the public and political life of the colony—there were no newspapers and no correspondence to outside journals, nothing in the way of contemporary history or literature which describes it. The labour problem, as old as civilization itself, obtruded itself at the very outset. The discovery of gold in California, with its speculative aftermath, its opportunities for acquiring sudden wealth, the high wages it brought in its wake, and the excitement it afforded, in 1849 and for a time after had a most demoralizing effect upon the servants of the company, who, though under contract, did not scruple to desert and flee from fort, farm

and ship to where fortune and bright lights beckoned. Governor Douglas, whose notions of contract were as punctilious as they would now be considered old-fashioned, was at his wits' end for a remedy, and we read:

> The governor next proposed that a law should be passed adapted to the circumstances of the colony, regulating the relations of employer and servant and for punishing offences such as insolent language, neglect of duty, and absence without leave of the employer by summary infliction of fine or imprisonment. The measure considered highly important and necessary; deferred for consideration.

It remained deferred and still slumbers in the archives. All the officials of the company, however, remained true to their obligations and stuck to their post, although the temptation was great to many of them.

Another problem, not at all new in government, was that of raising revenue, and a plan submitted by Douglas was to impose a duty of five per cent on all imports of British and foreign goods. It was objected in council that it would not only prove a bar to the progress of settlement in the way of bringing in implements and furniture, but as there were not more than twenty settlers on the island (1852), the duty would not pay for the cost of collection. It, too, was taken into "due consideration" and never emerged from that stage. Free trade remained the policy of Vancouver Island until the union of the colonies in 1866. The question of revenue was a grave one, as it continued to be under many legislatures, colonial and provincial thereafter. As a matter of fact, the revenue derived from public houses in 1856 was all that was at the disposal of the assembly. Under the terms of the grant to the Hudson's Bay Company, other revenues derived from the sale of land, timber and minerals were remitted and placed to the reserve fund, and appropriated by the company for public improvements, except ten per cent allowed to the company in the nature

of a dividend or allowance for management. The revenue from public houses in 1855 was £340, and the revenue for 1856 having been paid over into the reserve fund immediately after collection was not available for appropriation. So that we find £130 placed at the disposal of His Excellency out of which, among other things, to pay the following: £50 to defray expenses of copying statistics and documents for the use of the House; £10 to Mr. Robert Barr for past services as clerk of the House (Mr. Barr, by the way, was first colonial schoolmaster); £5 to Mr. Andrew Muir, for past services as sergeant-at-arms; £25, salary for clerk of the House for 1857; £15, salary as sergeant-at-arms and messenger, 1857; £20 for lighting, heating and furnishing House, 1857; £5 for stationery for members. Viewed in the light of small things compared with great, we can read with appreciation this clause in the somewhat grandiloquent speech from the Throne when Governor Douglas opened the first legislative assembly in 1856:

Self-supporting and defraying all the expenses of its own government, it presents a striking contrast to every other colony in the British Empire, and like the native pines of its storm-beaten promontories, it has acquired a slow but hardy growth.

In this message to his "faithful commoners" Douglas went on further to expatiate, though one fact stated dampens the ardour created by the foregoing. The advice which accompanies it is excellent, and might be equally, if not in a greater degree, applicable to-day:

The poverty of the country and the limited means of a population against the pressure of numberless privations must necessarily restrict the amount of taxation; it should, therefore, be our constant study to regulate the public expenditure according to the means of the country, and to live strictly within the means of our income.

The common error of running into speculative improve-

ments, entailing debts upon the colony for a very uncertain advantage should be carefully avoided.

The demands upon the public revenue will at present chiefly arise from improvements of the internal communications of the country (which extended for at least twenty-five miles), and providing for the education of the young, the erection of places of worship, the defence of the country, and the administration of justice.

With an available revenue of about £350, or approximately $1,750, for all purposes of government, not now sufficient to pay for the stationery for the present members of the legislature, and about twenty settlers in all, the wisdom of these admonitions is self-evident.

In the message in question, Douglas was quite optimistic as to the prospects of reciprocity with the United States and the benefits to be derived from it, but some time later we read in the minutes of the council regret expressed on account of the failure of negotiations to obtain it. To judge from the tenor of the Queen's Speech; delivered by him, the governor was at least theoretically a free-trader, but it did not square with his notion of practical requirements, when before and after its deliverance he strove for an imposition of five per cent duty on all British and foreign goods.

Among the very earliest subjects to have the attention of the council was the necessity of regulating and controlling the sale of intoxicants—the time-honoured liquor question. Just to what extent or how liquor was obtained, outside of the rum rations to servants of the company, it would be difficult at this date to say. Evidently there were large-sized leaks. The company had an exclusive monopoly of everything, including stimulants. Bibosity was great, and its concomitant was thirst, because it is recorded in a private diary—and allowance must be made for the Scottish tendency to exaggerate—that "it would take a line of packet ships running between here and San Francisco to supply this

island with grog." Indeed, we learn from Bancroft and other sources that in this respect there were giants in those days. In such a condition of things, especially from the point of one so straight-laced and circumspect as Douglas, there was obviously a necessity for regulation of the traffic. From an economic outlook, as the available revenue depended solely upon the sale of liquor, it was well, too, to make of virtue a necessity. So a licence was granted to inns and public and beer houses, and a duty charged on the same. In the discussion of the situation as a whole there was a large spice of unconscious humour. The schedule of levies decided upon was as follows: For a wholesale licence, £100; for a retail licence, £120. To quote from another publication: "A wholesale licence was defined as meaning sale of spirits in cask or case as imported, and a retail licence the sale in smaller quantities, for 'reasonable refreshment' to be consumed on the premises. It was, however, allowable to sell liquor to 'farmers and other persons, possessed of landed property,' residing at a distance, in any quantities not less than two gallons, intended strictly for home consumption and not for sale." That the liquor interest was then obtruding itself is evident from a petition presented requesting a modification permitting publicans to sell spirits by the bottle to be consumed off the premises. It may be stated here, parenthetically, that since that date (1852), until 1910 or 1911, not a bar in British Columbia was closed night or day, Sunday or Monday, except in rural districts or remote places where customers were not available during the late night and early morning hours. In other words, there were no closing regulations.

The subject of education has been pretty well dealt with elsewhere in this volume. The prominent members of the community being officials of the Hudson's Bay Company, and Scotch, they had a due appreciation of "book learning," and so far as the meagre resources of the colony would

permit were willing to make generous provision for schools. Appropriations were made for two, one of which was in Victoria. The population being scattered, it was necessary to have boarding schools. The schedule of rates fixed by the council was: Eighteen guineas per annum for children of colonists and servants of the company, and anything that might be agreed upon for non-residents.

The council also made appropriations for a court house, the building of certain roads and bridges, and the erection of a parish church. The question of defence, however, was the subject of the deepest concern for a time. In his message of 1856 to the Legislative Assembly, Douglas referred to the large number of northern Indians who had visited Victoria. Their presence, he said, "has excited in our minds a not unreasonable degree of alarm." In 1854, the war between Great Britain and Russia had been keenly and seriously discussed, and the governor made a proposal to call out all the able-bodied men of the colony and to levy and arm an auxiliary body of natives. This was vetoed for two reasons. Any force of white men available would be so small as to offer no effectual resistance against an invading force of Russians, and to arm and drill natives would be to place a dangerous power in their hands, on account of their great numerical superiority. On the Pacific coast of British Columbia alone there were then probably about 25,000 Indians, the males of whom could form a very formidable force. In respect of the Russians it was wisely decided to leave the matter of defence in the hands of the British government, in the meantime, the steamer *Otter* being manned with a force of thirty hands to "watch over the safety of the settlements." A British frigate was sent out in 1855, and in that year Esquimalt became a British naval base on the Pacific, and so remained for precisely fifty years, when in 1905, as the result of a change in naval policy, it was taken over by the Canadian government.

As a matter of fact, there was little to fear from the Russians, as by a quiet understanding between the Hudson's Bay Company and the Russian American Company hostilities were not directed to the American side of the ocean. An attack on Vancouver Island, though it might be serious to the former's interests and to the citizens, Great Britain could strike a body blow at the latter by reprisals in Alaska much more serious in its consequences.

As to the Indians, troubles in 1855 did arise as between them and settlers, and, in the following year, an invasion of northern Indians seemed at one time to be imminent. True to his promise to the legislature, that "I shall nevertheless continue to conciliate the goodwill of the native Indian tribes by treating them with justice and forbearance, and by protecting civil and agrarian rights," he was enabled to avert any trouble on that score. His influence with the native tribes was very great, and the traditional policy of the company, of which he was then head, of peace, conciliation and fair treatment proved more potent than arms, although, in 1856, a rifle company of thirty men and officers was formed as a precautionary measure. Further in respect of the Indians, though relations during the colonial period were always friendly, and just treatment and a wise policy was strongly urged by the Home government, nothing was done in the way of the extinction or definition of their rights by treaty, as in other parts of Canada, with the exception of a few tribes on the southern part of the island of Vancouver. In 1876, by a convention with the government, arrangements were made by the province for the setting aside of reserves in all parts of the province, until land to the extent of 750,000 acres were apportioned for their use. The mistake of early days, however, is having its aftermath in the representations being made by the Indians to both the Federal and Imperial governments for a settlement of the Indian claims for lands. Their grievances as set forth

by themselves and their advocates would make a long chapter.

It will be seen that the external problems of labour, education, liquor, finances and fiscal policy, roads and bridges, church and state and national defence occupied pretty much the same attention as to-day and were relatively the same. Vancouver Island and British Columbia in the early days of their political development were spared some of the vexed questions which perturbed eastern Canada for so long a period; largely and fortunately because similar conditions did not exist to create them, because there were examples not to follow, and because some of Canada's problems had been solved. British Columbia did not achieve responsible government until 1871, but with the exception of a few almost inevitable conflicts between the executive and legislative bodies, issues were never so vitally important as to cause strife.

N

When Vancouver Island attained to representative government in 1856 and for over a decade afterward it was an Arcady in miniature. Victoria was a hamlet of a few hundred souls and the fort was the centre of its activities and those of the surrounding settlements, which were few and, relatively speaking, far between. Beyond the fort were the fields of the Hudson's Bay Company's farms and a few industrial establishments, and from it ran roads in various directions. An embryo Government street—which now leads to the government buildings and the Straits of Georgia on the one side, and to Esquimalt on the other, along the east side of the stockade—connected with the highways leading to Saanich, Esquimalt, Metchosin and Sooke. A winding lane, eastward by swamps and meadow, has become the important thoroughfare now known as

Fort street. Life in this almost sylvan retreat was idyllic in its simplicity and natural beauty. Elk and deer were to be seen grazing in the open glades along with the cattle. Grouse drummed vigorously within earshot of the fort. The rural aspect, however, was relieved by the wonderfully picturesque encompassment of sea and circumjacent mountains, the noble Olympian range conspicuously lining the opposite shore in American territory. "A bit of old England" of the early Victorian era had been transplanted in this remote outpost of Empire and it grew in congenial soil. The colonists were British and brought with them British characteristics and love of old-fashioned traditions, and created, with less of convention, an England or a Scotland in miniature. The farms, modelled after those of the old country—the well-tilled fields, the comfortable farmhouse, the barns and outbuildings, generally built in the form of a square with the farmyard inside—all reminded the settler of his old home and old associations. The local affairs of the Hudson's Bay Company, the proceedings of court under the presidency of Judge Cameron, the legislative assembly and the social affairs of the small community furnished the gossip of the day, while the old country newspapers, which came in large batches with every very infrequent ship, gave the news of the outside world. Though the papers were months old, the contents were still news and were read eagerly from the first line on the first page to the last line on the last page, including the advertisements. The reading community at the end of the year was really better informed on the events of the world than the ordinary reader in eastern Canada with all the advantages of daily and weekly newspapers and magazines. A general hospitality marked the social relations of the people. Feast days and holidays were loyally observed, with picnics and sports in summer and indoor gatherings in winter, which were remarkable for bounteous display of honest colonial

fare. As the governor averred on one occasion, the people were happy and industrious. While this was true, such a condition of affairs—in which activities, ambitions, and physical outlook were limited to a narrow sphere—developed an inevitable *laissez faire* or *laissez-aller*, the attitude of mind that what happened beyond their immediate environment did not matter. It was interesting in the way that one contemplates the stars at night. The people became home-brewed in their mentality as to social and political affairs, and in the end rather resented the introduction of any new element of ferment. With the mining excitement and the inrush of people, this equilibrious pose was upset, but that was only temporarily, because it soon died down, and the newcomers themselves, who stayed, became in a sense lotus-eaters as well. After the Fraser and Cariboo rushes had ceased and matters settled down to be taken as a matter of course in a more enlarged way, traditions of pre-gold-mining were perpetuated; and so in eastern Canada we heard about the happy go lucky methods of Victoria; for instance, that men came down to their offices at ten and half-past ten in the morning, took an hour and a half for luncheon, went to the club or their home at four in the afternoon, kept commercial travellers waiting for a week or a month before giving an order that might have been signed up in a few hours, never accepted thirty-day drafts, but got long credit extending to six months or a year, and themselves rendered their bills every once in a long while. It was current belief that the 24th of May, which has been respected as loyally from the first as were most of the Ten Commandments by most of the people, lasted as a celebration for several days, that a half holiday was declared every time there was a cricket or football match or a horse race, or an excursion to Uncle Sam's territory, which was more or less an annual affair, usually on the fourth of July. There was no thought of annexation, far from it in such a

community so thoroughly saturated with British sentiment, but Uncle Sam was their near and only neighbour. A great feature of the 24th of May celebrations were regattas on the Gorge, a long narrow inlet separating the main part of the city from West Victoria, which was largely an Indian reserve—the home of the Songhees—in which the Indian canoe races became the outstanding attraction. As many as fifteen or twenty tribes would be represented by picked men in their huge war canoes—but since the appearance of the white man's government on the coast used for racing purposes and long distance transportation. Big prizes were hung up for these and the Indians struggled for them with all the strength of their mighty prowess with the paddle. The Indian spectators along the banks became tremendously excited and bet heavily among themselves. These stories told in eastern Canada were somewhat exaggerated, as such stories usually are, but in a substantial sense were true. The old-timers whole-heartedly enjoyed themselves, and in the matter of sport of whatever nature, including shooting and fishing, no opportunity was allowed to slip. If business interfered with pleasure, they gave up business for the moment, because in the absence of the fierce competition of the present day they could do the same business to-morrow just as well. It must not be understood, however, that the old-time business men were not alive to their opportunities; but they refused to become slaves to their desks and their counters. Bankruptcy was exceedingly rare and honesty was a cardinal principle of their affairs. It was the spirit of the Douglas period that existed and persisted, a leaven of the Hudson's Bay Company system. Modern conditions have changed old methods and business is business as elsewhere, but the spirit of sport and hospitality and holidays still remains, imparting to the coast of British Columbia a peculiar, residential charm, and to the social atmosphere is added the enhancement of scenic

environment of sea and mountains and picturesque landscape. Old-timers and a number of the present generation, who remember something of the past, still talk of these good old days that have gone never to return, and they will tell you it is no wonder that the new-comer, who arrived after the completion of the railway to seize business opportunities, was not particularly welcome, because he could not immediately adapt himself to that placid and pleasant phase of existence which had come to mean the life of the community and was in a sense a social intrusion.

O

It is interesting in connection with the names of New Caledonia, Oregon and Columbia, to know how the name British Columbia came to be bestowed upon the territory north of the 49th parallel bearing it. When the new colony was being formed in 1858, the question arose as to what it should be called. New Caledonia, by which appellation it was more or less generally known, was proposed. France, however, objected, because it had a possession already known and named as such. The matter was referred to Her Majesty Queen Victoria by Sir Edward Bulwer Lytton, secretary of state for the colonies, and it was she herself who made the decision, thus recorded:

The Queen has received Sir Edward Bulwer Lytton's letter. As the name New Caledonia is objected to as being already borne by another colony or island claimed by the French, it may be better to give the new colony west of the Rocky Mountains another name. New Hanover, New Columbia and New Georgia appear from the maps to be the names of subdivisions of that country, but do not appear on all maps. The only name which is given to the whole in every map the Queen has consulted is "Columbia," but as there exists also a Columbia in South America and the citizens of the United States called their country also

Columbia, at least in poetry, "British Columbia" might be, in the Queen's opinion, the best name.

It is also interesting to note incidentally that the Queen named the capital of the new colony, New Westminster, to settle a dispute between her Colonial officials as to whether it should be called "Queenborough" or "Queensborough." Her name was already embalmed in "Victoria," the capital of Vancouver Island.

P

As stated in the main body of this volume, a discussion of the limitations of sovereign rights which should be enjoyed by the respective powers making claims—Russia, Great Britain and the United States—was precipitated by the *ukase* of Alexander I, Emperor of Russia, dated September 16th, 1821, granting "the pursuits of commerce, whaling, fishery, and all other industry" on the north-west coast of America between Bering strait and latitude 51° N. to Russian subjects exclusively and prohibiting foreigners, under heavy penalties, from approaching these coasts within less than one hundred geographical miles. The object of this decree, as explained by the government of Great Britain, was to prevent the "commerce interlope" of citizens of the United States, who not only carried on an illicit trade in sea-otter skins but traded prohibited articles, especially gunpowder, with the natives of Russian America. Paraphrasing freely from a paper read before the Royal Society of Canada in 1915, prepared by an acknowledged authority, Mr. James White, F.R.S.C.: this was practically an extension of the *ukase* of 1799, which granted the Russian-American Fur Company the exclusive right to hunt and trade between 55° N. and Bering strait and on the islands in the vicinity—and not protested by any of the powers—southward and westward. The *ukase* of 1821, however,

was described by Sir Charles Bagot, then British Ambassador to St. Petersburg, as an "extraordinary pretension." Between 1799 and September, 1821, the North West Company, and its successor, the Hudson's Bay Company, had reached the coast and established themselves in the interior of what is now British Columbia. At the instigation of the Hudson's Bay Company, Mr. White suggests that Great Britain protested these claims; so also did the United States, which objected to American whalers and traders being excluded from the territory. Negotiations and private correspondence then followed. Count Lieven, Russian ambassador to Great Britain, advised confidentially that Great Britain should bring forward her claims to territory on the north-west coast, so as not to be shut out by any agreement between the United States and Russia. He next stated that he was instructed to propose that the question of strict right should be temporarily set aside so that differences could be amicably adjusted at St. Petersburg. John Q. Adams, United States secretary of state, suggested joint negotiations by Great Britain and the United States at St. Petersburg, stating that the United States had no claim north of 51° N. Sir Charles Bagot thought that was the "most agreeable mode" in which the question could be brought under discussion, but two months later he wrote that, notwithstanding Adams' admission referred to, the United States was fully prepared to assert equal pretension with Great Britain and Russia to the whole coast as high as 61° N., basing the claim as successors in title to Spain by virtue of the treaty of Florida Blanca, 1819. In December, 1923, was interjected the famous Monroe Doctrine, which declared that the American continents were, thenceforth, "not to be considered as subjects for future colonization by any European power," and in the same month Rush proposed that Russia be limited on the south by latitude 55°, that Great Britain be limited on

the west coast to latitude 51° N. to 55° N., and the United States on the north by latitude 51° N. As Great Britain had repeatedly refused to accept 49°, Mr. White adds that "this proposition did not err on the side of modesty." The upshot was that both countries made separate treaties with Russia, leaving respective rights to be determined by subsequent events, as provided for by the treaty of 1818.

Mr. White gives some hitherto unpublished correspondence between Sir Charles Bagot and George Canning, secretary of state for foreign affairs, which "throws considerable light upon the secret opposition of the United States and demonstrates the insincerity of Middleton, the American minister." There are some illuminating passages, which are quoted for their intrinsic interest in this connection, but by way of preliminary, on January 24th, 1824, Stratford Canning, British minister to the United States, cousin to George, wrote Bagot:

There are so many points of rivalship between the two countries, with so much prejudice on one side and so much forwardness, not to say impudence, on the other, that I almost despair of ever seeing my wishes on that subject realized. I see that you are about to plunge into your north-western negotiations, and I congratulate you most heartily on having at last to swim in that element without an attendant Yankee offering a cork-jacket, and watching the opportunity of putting your head under water.

Bagot wrote on October 5th from St. Petersburg to Canning in London:

You may depend upon it that the Americans will try to interfere somehow or other in our boundary negotiation as distinguished from the maritime jurisdiction question. Mr. Middleton has already told me clearly that he thinks that the United States have an interest in the business—and upon what grounds think you?—because Spain had by treaty to trade with our coasts in that quarter, and that the United States by their last treaty with Spain have acquired

all their rights in that respect, and stand in her shoes. Is not this preposterous?

Again on October 29th:

Who am I to side with? That seems to be in point of fact, the question to which Mr. Middleton's new instructions have given rise. Am I to side with America, and deny all claims of Russia to any part of the north-west coast south of the 61st degree of north latitude? Or am I to side with Russia, and deny all claim of the United States to any part of the coast north (for example) of the mouth of the Columbia river? Or am I to side with neither—to admit that we have all three equal pretensions—and to give it to be understood that we would consent to divide the whole coast between the 24nd and 61st degrees as well as we can, and according to our respective conveniences.

These questions are much too important in their consequences for me to give an opinion upon, even if I could form one in my own mind, which I cannot, until I know more accurately than I do whether our principal object is to secure the fur trade on the continent for the Hudson's Bay Company, or to secure to ourselves a share in the sea-otter trade with China—or to secure both.

The pretensions of the United States are in the true spirit of their usual encroachment: and as there is something in their argument, they may, I think, contrive to make this a troublesome business.

On February 17th, 1824, Bagot wrote:

Middleton tells me that he regrets the course which we take because he now feels in a scrape for not having sooner executed his original instructions, instead of waiting to see the result of the proposal made to us for concert of measures —and what do you imagine these original instructions were? Nothing less than to propose to Russia to proceed to divide the whole coast in question between her and the United States to our entire exclusion. It is even so—I had it from his own lips yesterday that such were his instructions, and an hour afterwards I had from those of Poletica that he had actually made to him the proposal. Now, there does appear to me to be a baseness in this business on the part of Adams,

which nobody but Adams is capable of. But this trick has failed—I shall conclude, certainly speedily, and I think satisfactorily, our separate arrangements, and Adams may bellow as much as he pleases.

On March 29th, 1824, he again wrote:

You will, perhaps, think from my long despatch about north-west coasts that I have worked myself into a rage upon the subject? This is not so—but I now know this government *well*, and I wish to impress upon you that in a question such as that in hand, they must be dealt with as you would deal with a horse-dealer. Their whole conduct in the late negotiation has been of the most huxtering and pedlarlike character, and in my opinion they will not be brought to reason, unless they are told roundly that if they will not arrange this matter equitably and according to our mutual present conveniences, they shall not be *allowed* to settle anywhere upon the islands or continent south of their present lowest establishment, *viz.*, Sitka. They have not a shadow of claim, below this point, to stand upon. It is too much to claim to the 51st degree (they might equally well have claimed to the 42nd) and then to treat their retractation of a preposterous pretension as a concession they may be permitted to market. The Emperor Paul's pretension to the 55th degree in 1799 was never notified to any power on earth. In the affair of Nootka Sound, only nine years before, the Empress Catherine told the Court of Spain (*see* Annual Register, 1790), that she had no pretensions on these coasts which interfered with theirs, and theirs extended to the *60th* degree. In the instructions given by Louis XVI (no bad geographer) to La Pérouse in 1785, it was never supposed that Russia had any claims whatever on the continent and it was doubted whether she had the right of occupancy in all the Kuerile and Aleutian islands. These instructions are so remarkable that I cannot resist enclosing you an extract of them.

Sir Charles Bagot, who apparently was not able to accomplish a settlement, was transferred to The Hague, and was succeeded at St. Petersburg by Stratford Canning. Bagot, who came to Canada in 1842 as governor-general, was not

of irascible temper, but rather of very conciliatory disposition, and it may be assumed that the difficulties he encountered in Russia over the matter were not of his making, but the result of efforts of the Russian and American governments to overreach Great Britain, which, however, did not eventually succeed.

In respect of the Alaskan boundary, out of which grew the Alaskan boundary dispute, and related in a sense to the Oregon boundary question, the merits of the case are really very much more simple than they were made to appear. Russian interest in the boundary were identical with that of the Russian-American Fur Company. It was what the latter wanted that governed the policy and diplomacy of the former. It was purely a commercial "proposition," if we use the word in its accepted American sense. The Indians of the Alaskan coast were the intermediaries between the company and the Indians of the hinterland on the mainland in trading for furs. In order to preserve a monopoly of that trade no interior natives were permitted to come to the coast with their furs. Had they done so they would have been massacred. At stated periods the coast Indians travelling up the inlets, met the Indians of the interior on the summits beyond, bought their furs and sold them to the Russian traders on their return. The monopoly of the fur trade of the interior for the coast Indians really meant a monopoly for the Russian-American Fur Company, and their object in defining the boundary line was not so much with territory in view as to have it sufficiently far inland to include the heads of all inlets, so that foreigners could not enter and trade in that territory. It does not appear either that the Hudson's Bay Company made any protest; indeed, it rather suited its purpose that the "commerce interlope" of the citizens of the United States should be prevented. The company had its plans for reaching the Indians of what is now Yukon territory

by interior routes, which afterwards, with great difficulty, it is true, was accomplished. Its officials were long-sighted as well as long-headed Scotchmen. All maps printed since the date of the treaty until comparatively recent years showed the boundary line where the Russians evidently wanted it. In the final determination the question was which channel the line should take, the inner channel between Wales and Pearse islands of Portland Canal, or the centre channel. A physical examination shows the inner channel is almost completely clogged with kelp, and not navigable in the usual way. The islands in question, according to international usage, would naturally belong to the adjacent mainland. So far as is known they are neither of material nor of strategic value, they being barren and commanded by the over-hanging precipitous cliffs of the adjacent mainland and consequently a valueless prize for international strife. It was well in the interests of international goodwill that the clamour over their cession by Lord Alverstone should have so quickly died down when the merits of the dispute were understood.

In the effluxion of time, it has been proved that Alaska is from the point of view of natural resources, particularly in its fisheries and minerals, a very valuable territory. Before it was purchased in 1867 by W. H. Seward, United States secretary of state for $7,200,000, it has been stated, and has become a matter of common acceptance, that it was offered by Russia to Great Britain. This is one of the numerous fictions of history. Great Britain never had the offer from Russia to purchase Alaska and never had the opportunity to negotiate for it. Negotiations with the United States had begun as far back as 1860, but, the Civil War breaking out, everything, except its prosecution, was set aside until after it was over. Russian America had never been other than a source of loss to the Russian treasury, and to a considerable extent a source of annoyance and

trouble. It is true that at one time, when the Pacific coast of North America north of the Spanish possessions seemed to be, and actually was, not occupied, Russia had ambitions to extend her settlements south of Russian America as far as Spanish territory, but she soon discovered that her aspirations in that direction would be thwarted by Spain and Great Britain and later by the United States, and in the end gave up all thoughts of territorial aggrandisement in America. For long her interest in Russian America was vested in the Russian-American Fur Company, in which members of the royal family and prominent noblemen were shareholders. Stock in the company became unprofitable and was on the decline in value when negotiations with the United States were renewed. W. H. Seward expressed himself as being always in favour of purchase, and his first offer of $5,000,000 was finally raised to $7,200,000. The position at the time is explained by James White, previously referred to:

An American company desired to obtain a licence to trade in furs in part of Russian America. Sir George Simpson, an able autocrat of the Hudson's Bay Company, had passed away in 1860; in 1863 the Hudson's Bay Company had been taken over by the International Financial Association; since 1864 the new company had had under consideration the sale to Canada of its rights and claims and the only point at issue was the question of price; the lease had only been renewed for three-year periods since 1859. As it was, therefore, obvious to Russia that the Hudson's Bay Company would allow the lease to expire at a very early date, she decided to sell the whole territory to the United States, instead of leasing the coast strip to an American fur-trading company, as at first suggested.

Hubert Howe Bancroft, in the main very reliable, confirms this, and makes this observation:

If, at this juncture, a prompt and satisfactory answer had been returned by the Hudson's Bay Company, Alaska

might at this day have been one of the numerous colonies of Great Britain, instead of being, as in fact it became for a time, the only colony belonging to the United States. But no answer came, or none that was acceptable; nor at the beginning of 1867 had any agreement been made by the Russian-American Company with the Imperial government as to the renewal of its charter.

Undoubtedly the impression that Alaska had been offered to Great Britain arose out of the negotiations with the Hudson's Bay Company for a renewal of the lease. The sale of the territory to the United States was carried on with great secrecy and the British ambassador at St. Petersburg was not aware of negotiations on foot, until the sale had been concluded. Buchanan, the ambassador in question, in a despatch to Lord Stanley, stated that in an interview with Prince Gortchakoff, the latter had assured him that the sale had no political significance, being made for entirely economical reasons, and the despatch concludes:

I said it might have been considered a friendly act on the part of the Russian government if she had afforded Her Majesty's government or the government of Canada an opportunity of purchasing the territory which has been sold, but that not having done so, was materially unimportant as I feel assured it would not have been bought.

And in a reply, he received a note approving of his language to Gortchakoff, stating:

You were quite right in saying that if the territory had been offered for sale to this country it would not have been bought; the offer might have been an act of courtesy on the part of the Russian government, but it certainly would have been declined.

The reasons which actuated the United States in buying we need not discuss. They were probably territorial and on account of the fisheries of Alaska. They may also have been political. However, Seward did not escape his *quantum* of abuse on account of it in the United States.

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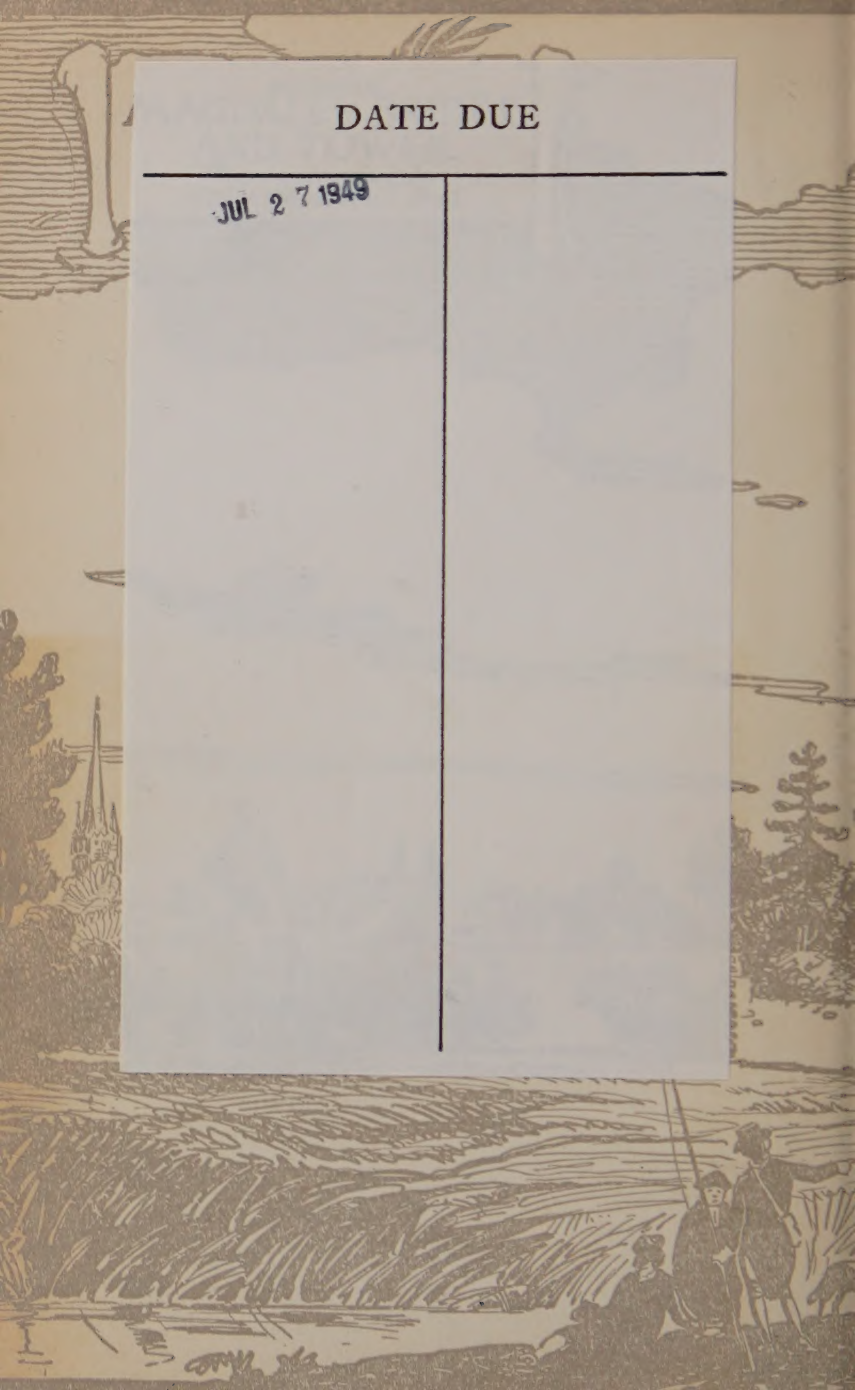

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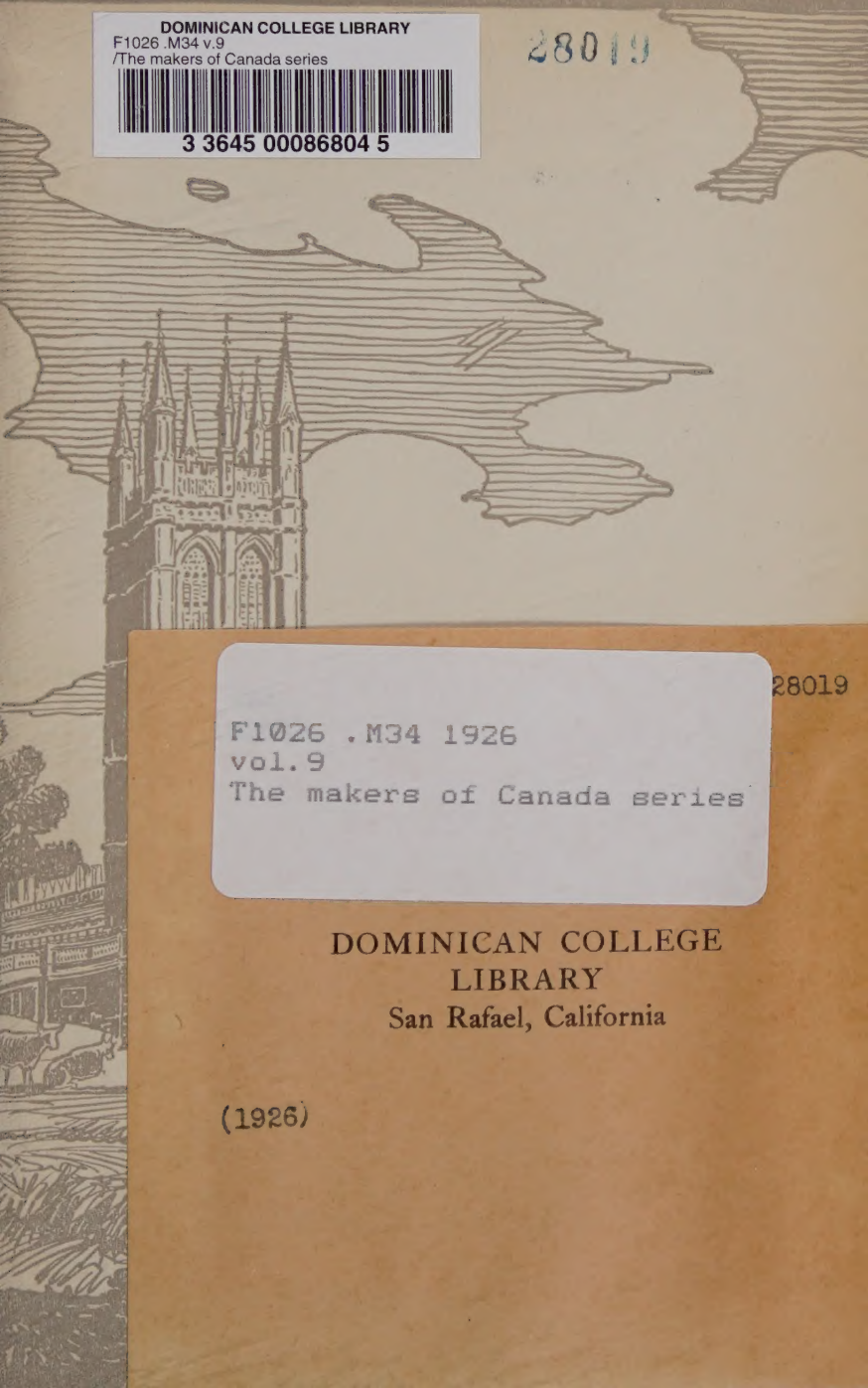
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